

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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## A DOUBTING HEART.

### CHAPTER I.

#### IDLE TEARS.

"WELL, Alma, I really think that at last I have earned a few minutes' rest."

The speaker of this sentence was not, as might be supposed, a weary sempstress in an attic, hushing the click of her machine, as it completed the last stitch in her long, long day's tale of work, or a washerwoman in a cellar wringing the soap-suds from her wrinkled arms, or a governess, whose charges had just been borne off to bed. It was a handsome, matronly lady, in a black velvet dress, who, suiting her action to her words, sank down into a well-cushioned chair by a glowing fire in a London drawing-room. The last visitor had been shown out, the footman had disappeared with the afternoon tea-tray, the doors of the inner drawing-room were shut, and the curtains drawn across; but there was something beyond even these tokens of quiet, that combined to fill the room just then with a subtle atmosphere of repose. There was a suggestion, though one could not precisely say where it lurked, that this delightful stillness succeeded a commotion of some sort. It might be given by some unusually festive arrangements of the furniture of the room, or by occasional sounds of hurrying feet and clacking tongues that came up from the lower regions. Alma read it most plainly in

the radiant self-satisfaction that shone in her mother's face, and seemed to surround her whole person with an aura of congratulation and conscious well doing. Only for an instant did her lace cap touch the back of her chair, the next her head was erect again, and her face turned to her daughter with an alert expression on it, which told Alma that the discussion of yesterday's events, that had been going on since morning, and of which she herself was sick at heart, was about to be opened again in some new phase.

"Do you know, my dear Alma," Lady Rivers began, "I really can't yet take in the thought that only yesterday at three o'clock Constance left us—Constance and her husband. Now the excitement is all over, we shall begin to miss the dear child dreadfully. I wonder I don't feel it more, but of course I shall now that all is over."

"I hope not, mamma."

"But I shall. A mother must feel the loss of her daughter, however satisfactory the cause of the separation may be. Do you know, Alma, I fancied Lady Forest was a little surprised that the leave-taking between myself and Constance passed so quietly. *She* cried when she said 'good-bye' to her son, I observed, but then she is a widow; I am sure I hope she won't argue from my self-control,

that Constance is not a great loss to me. I hope it won't give a wrong impression about how that lovely creature is regarded in her own home. I really don't know how it happened. I am sure my feelings are keen enough; but yesterday morning was such a whirl, and just as the travellers were starting, Preston came to me with a teasing question about the arrangements for the evening. I was obliged to attend to him, or nothing would have been as it should be."

"Lady Forest is differently circumstanced, you see, mamma; she can afford to have feelings on public occasions, and let things take their course. She is not on promotion as we are."

"I should be very much grieved if I thought Constance was in any danger of being looked down upon by the people she is going among. I have been doing my very utmost ever since I saw how things were likely to turn out, to give the Forests the right impression about all our connections. I have given your father all the hints I dare give, to prevent his making unfortunate allusions, as he does sometimes, and I have gone against my own feelings and run the risk of offending old friends, for the sake of keeping all our entertainments lately, as nearly as possible, to their set. My own feelings would have led me to ask Emmie West to be one of the bridesmaids, but I refrained, from fear of giving theirs the smallest shock."

"I wonder what sort of feelings those are that would be shocked at the sight of Emmie West?"

"Lady Forest is very inquisitive, and might have asked questions. As it was, I think she must have been struck with the fact that the person of most consequence in the room was a friend on our side, quite unconnected with them. I wonder whether your father talked at all to Lord Anstice. I rather thought he would have proposed his health, but he did not. Do you suppose Lord Anstice was satisfied with the amount of attention he received, Alma?"

"I did not ask him, mamma; but I don't suppose he came here to talk to papa, or to have his health drunk either."

"Alma, have you an idea that he came for any other reason than because he was asked? You will tell me, I am sure, if you have."

"He did not come for the reason that has just shot into your head, dear mother, I assure you, so put it away as quickly as you can. It was all a joke to him. His cousin, whom we do know intimately, and whom we did not ask, saw the invitation we sent to him whom we knew very little, and ordered him to accept it. My clairvoyance does not go further than that. I can't make up my mind how much good nature there was in Wynyard Anstice's bestirring himself to secure us the presence of a live earl at our first wedding, or how far it was done in pure scorn. Lord Anstice did as he was bid, and is only disappointed that we are all so like the people he sees every day, that coming to our wedding has given him nothing new to talk about. If we had been vulgar on the surface, so that he could see it, he would have been quite satisfied with his morning's entertainment."

"Really, Alma, I wonder how you can talk in that cold-blooded way. If Wynyard Anstice has been representing us to his cousin as proper subjects for ridicule, I can only say he makes a most unworthy return for all the kindness I showed him in old times, when your brothers used to bring him from school to spend holidays with us. I can't believe such a thing of him, however."

"And you need not, mamma. I am quite as sure as you can be, that Mr. Anstice has never spoken disparagingly of us to any one, and I sincerely believe he meant to do you a pleasure by sending his cousin here yesterday. Perhaps he thought it would please me too; I don't know."

"Then you should not say such misleading things, my dear, making one uncomfortable for nothing."

"You are right, mamma, I should not."

The conversation seemed to have come to a standstill, as it was apt to do when Wynyard Anstice's name got into any talk between the mother and daughter.

Alma, who was much given to tracing effects to their causes, was just beginning to wonder how this name came to be spoken so often as was the case—seeing that her own determination, and, as she believed, her mother's was to keep it from ever being spoken at all: was it really so much in her secret thoughts, that it forced itself to her tongue without her will's leave—when the thread of her self-questioning was broken by the entrance of the servant with the evening letters. A foreign one, addressed to Alma, fixed her mother's eyes, as well as her own.

"From Constance," exclaimed Lady Rivers, leaning forward in her chair, the self-satisfaction passing from her face as a flash of true mother-hunger came for a moment into her eyes.

"Be quick and open it, Alma; there will be something for me inside. What! not a line—well, read—what does the sweet child say? Is she comfortable and happy?"

"There is not much; you had better read it mamma; it is chiefly directions about sending on her boxes," said Alma, as she handed a sheet, with a few lines scribbled on it, to her mother.

"And there is nothing more? Alma, are you sure?" said Lady Rivers, after a moment's silence, during which her heart, deadened and choked with world dust as it was, had been rent with a sore pang. "You are sure there is no slip of paper inside the envelope with a more private word to me or you? This tells us nothing."

"It is all there is; and mamma, I am very sorry to see that you are so disappointed; but I think Constance is right; it would not do for her to begin writing private words to me, or even to you, now that she is Constance

Forest. She cannot have anything really interesting to tell us, so she had much better hold her tongue."

"My dear, I had a great deal to say to my mother the day after my wedding."

"You, mamma! Yes."

The tone in which this was said carried so much suggestion with it, that Lady Rivers sat upright in her chair, and folded her hands in her lap preparatory to answering it.

"My dear Alma, I wish you would get out of the habit of insinuating things. I don't think you can mean it, but really your manner of speaking of Constance's engagement ever since it took place, and now of her marriage, would lead any one who heard you to suppose that it was something forced upon her, instead of being her own deliberate choice, as you well know to have been the case."

"No, mamma, I don't mean to throw any blame of the kind on you; I beg your pardon if I have given that impression. I know that Constance chose her lot herself with her eyes open, and I really think she has taken what will suit her best; but, all the same, I doubt whether her thoughts about it just now will bear discussion with you or me, and I think she is wise to take the silent course, and work it into the best shape she can by herself."

"I can't see why she should not be radiantly happy and thankful to me who have done so much for her, and by my exertions (for this is the case, Alma) enabled her to gain the position she is best suited for. Sir John Forest may not be as clever as your father or so agreeable as Wynyard Anstice—"

"There is no need to bring his name into the discussion, mamma."

"Certainly not, except that you and your brothers have made so much more of him than he deserves; but, as I was saying, it is an enviable position Constance has gained, and I do think it is rather hard on me, who have toiled night and day for all your advancement, that when any one of you suc-

ceeds you should grudge me the satisfaction of knowing you are content."

"Dear mother, it is hard, but I think the fruit of the tree we are all of us busy gathering has that kind of taste. Constance has got her apple of Sodom, and it is a very handsome one to look at, we had better not insist on knowing exactly what she finds inside it, I think."

"My dear Alma, at least I hope you will keep such reflections for home use."

"You may depend on that, mamma, and after to-day, on this subject at least, I don't think you will hear any more of them. You must please forgive me if I have made you uncomfortable, but you know now that I have lost Constance: there is no one else to whom I can safely grumble on home subjects. However, I have done now, mamma. Let us turn to the other letters."

A heap of invitations and notes of congratulation were examined, discussed, and put aside to be answered later, and then Alma held up two thick letters to her mother's notice. "One is from Agatha from her convent, and the other from Aunt West, shall I read them aloud to you?"

Lady Rivers sank back in her chair with a look of real uneasiness and oppression now. "I don't think I can bear either to-night," she said; "they must keep for a few hours. Whatever Agatha has found to say about her sister's marriage, I know it will be something to give me pain; and the last time she wrote she signed herself, 'Sister Mary of Consolation,' as if to show how completely she had cut herself off from her own family. You may not readily believe it of me, Alma, but I could hardly get the thought of Agatha out of my head, all yesterday, the bitter thought of her estrangement from me, and you would have me suppose that I have lost Constance, too, in another way."

"I am sorry I said so much, mamma, for I am sure Constance will give you all the satisfaction out of her married

life she can; but how about Aunt West's letter?"

"Read it to yourself, and tell me by and by if there is anything that needs an answer. It can hardly be a pleasant letter. Of course your poor aunt must feel aggrieved, for I really have been obliged to neglect the Wests of late, and it is unfortunate that it should have happened so soon after the death of the little boy that your aunt took so much to heart. I am sure I felt for her at the time, but when soon after, this affair of Constance's came on, I could not help my time and thoughts being greatly taken up. Lately I have not dared even to mention the name of West before your father, for fear he should take it into his head to insist that Emmie and Harry, and perhaps half-a-dozen more of them should be asked to the wedding. Luckily your father never thinks of things unless they are actually brought before him. Of course I can't exactly explain to your poor aunt how it has been, or tell her I am determined to make up for my seeming neglect by doing all we can for them now."

"If they will let us."

"Ah, yes, Mr. West's temper is a great hindrance to the whole family: and your poor aunt has always given way far too much to him. I think, even with all their misfortunes she might with spirit have kept up the credit of the family better. I don't think I should ever have allowed children of mine to live in a house, the best rooms of which were let out to lodgers, *that* degradation, that last fatal step, I think, I should have had resolution to spare my family."

"Even with Mr. West for a husband. Mamma, what was Aunt Emmeline like when she was young—I don't mean as to looks—I can imagine that well enough; but, in short, how did she ever come to marry Mr. West?"

"My dear, things looked very differently then from what they do now. When we two sisters were engaged



about the same time, it was I who was thought to be doing the imprudent thing, and, so to speak, rather throwing myself away. Emmeline's match was considered a very good one. The junior partner in an old London mercantile house. I can remember how my mother used to explain it to our visitors, and the touch of mortification I felt at the few words that came to my share. 'Mr. Rivers is considered a clever man,' my mother would say, apologetically, 'and though promotion is slow at the bar, poor Agatha has made up her mind to take her chance with him.' No one could have foreseen then how affairs would turn out, or the altered position we two sisters should stand in towards each other by the time our children were grown up."

"So poor Aunt Emmeline has not even the satisfaction I always credited her with, of having a disinterested love match to look back upon."

"You do so jump to conclusions, Alma. I never said your aunt did not love Mr. West when she married him. Of course she did, and was flattered by his choice of her, as well as very thankful to give such a triumph to her father and mother, who had not had much prosperity in their early lives, I can tell you. She made them happy in their old age, and I often tell her the reflection should be a greater support to her in her misfortunes than I fear it is. At all events she has a right to look for a like return from her own daughter."

"Poor little Emmie, I hope you won't impress that obligation too strongly upon her, mamma; she has burdens enough already, and had better let the matrimonial one wait a while. It is all very strange. Now I think of it, I can remember stories of Agatha's and Frank's childhood which always struck me as investing the Wests with quite a different relationship to ourselves from anything that Constance and I ever saw. I have felt dimly, but never realized that they were the great people in

those days, and that some strange jugglery must have taken place to alter the perspective so."

"No one can say, my dear, that prosperity has changed my feelings; it has only laid fresh duties upon me, and of course your poor aunt Emmeline's duties are changed too."

"As far as we are concerned the life in Saville Street has faded into a dim background, which brings out all the sharp points of our prosperity, with different effects on the minds of the beholders—very different effects."

"You need not remind me of that, Alma; it is never far from my thoughts, and you cannot wonder if I feel very little disposed to throw you younger ones much under aunt Emmeline's influence. I never can forget that it was after spending a month in Saville Street that Agatha first began to talk to me about her distaste of the world, and attraction toward sacred poverty, and to put forth the extraordinary views that have landed her where she is now."

"Aunt West is not responsible, however, for the direction Agatha's enthusiasm has taken; she is quite as much puzzled at it as you are; and to set against Agatha's convent, in the scale of obligation between us and the Wests, you must put yesterday's wedding. You may not be aware of it, but it was after an afternoon spent in Saville Street that Constance made up her mind to throw over young Lawrence for all the dances she had promised him at old Lady Forest's ball, and forced herself to give Sir John the smile that settled his destiny for ever afterwards. I saw it all, and shall always maintain that if the atmosphere in the Wests' little breakfast room that day had been a whit more tolerable, and the boys' manners just a shade more civilised, young Lawrence would have won the day, and been the bridegroom at Constance's wedding, yesterday."

"Alma, what reckless talk! how can you allow yourself to indulge in it now?"

"Just this once more, mamma. As I said before, I have no one but you to grumble with, and after to-night I shall have so accustomed myself to the new state of affairs as not to care to talk about it. But I have done already. I am going to read the letters."

The mere outside of these seemed to have effectually quelled Lady Rivers's activity, for she at last leaned back in her chair, and shaded her eyes with her hand, not to see Alma's face as she read the closely written sheets slowly by the fire light. The flicker rose and fell, bringing out all manner of beautiful lights and shades on her sheeny silk dress, on the coils of soft light hair that lay low on her neck, and on a face, turned towards the flames, that was never hard to read, and that some people thought worthy of a good deal of study. Some people—others were apt to raise the question whether Alma Rivers would have passed for a beauty if the loveliness of her two sisters had not somehow involved her in a halo of admiration and observation that blinded the public eyes to her actual claims. And then would follow a criticism of features which demolished all her pretensions to the regular beauty they inherited from their mother, by showing how much likeness to her father there was in her spirited face. It was almost ridiculous, people said, to catch under a wreath of flowers and braided hair, a resemblance to those strongly marked characteristic features which political caricatures and illustrated journals had familiarised everybody with, and had held up again and again to public admiration or contempt. It really did make the homage paid to Alma as a reigning beauty almost absurd. But the homage continued to be paid through a second season when Lady Rivers's energetic management had taken her daughters *everywhere*; and there was one at least of her admirers who had gone the length of so distinguishing Alma Rivers from her reputation as a beauty, as to be willing

to allow that it was just those irregularities of form, and flashes of expression to which other people objected, that gave her face its conquering charm, and made it the one beautiful face in the world for him.

Alma let the letters fall into her lap when she had read them, and sat with her hands clasped round her knees looking into the fire for a long time. There was perfect stillness at last, and the room was full of the scents of hothouse flowers, and of a ruddy fire glow in which it was luxury to sit and dream, and there was, it must be confessed, a kind of luxury of sadness in the reverie to which Alma gave way. A sadness which was very far indeed from being pain, though as the thought rose, large round tears gathered in Alma's beautiful eyes, and made marks on the sheeny dress as they fell. She fancied herself very unhappy, for she had no experience which taught her the great gulf that lies between imaginative sorrows which can estimate the pathos of their own pain, and those vital ones which strike at the very root of thought; and she believed herself just now to have come to a point in her life when a great many cherished illusions must be parted with, and a reality she was not prepared for, embraced. Henceforth, she was saying to herself, there would be much of solitude in her life, and if any important decision had to be made she must make it alone; and, what was worse, without any clear principles or even definite wishes to shape her determination upon. She had, she told herself, grown out of many splendid hopes of her youth, and the failure consisted rather in that she was disenchanted with herself than with her old ideals. The objects she had longed for might even be near, ready for her to take; but she doubted very much her own strength to choose them now, or rather to be satisfied with them when chosen. Was it strength or weakness, reasonableness or folly? she asked herself with a touch of self-contempt which

made her see the desirableness of opposite goods so strongly that she could not heartily wish for anything; or was she really at twenty so dusty and dried up with the worldliness she had imbibed from her childhood as to have no power of *feeling* vividly, only this horrible power of *thinking*, of weighing everything in the balance, and finding it wanting. Why had Agatha deserted her? Agatha, through whose imagination she had been used to look at the world, who had invested the amusements and pursuits they had shared together with something from herself that made them worth living for. Why had Agatha, suddenly at the end of one month of absence, come back translated as it were into a new world, the entrance gate to which was for ever shut to Alma? Why had she deliberately stripped off the halo she had herself given from all their aims and pleasures, pronouncing them hollow and unsatisfying, and then stepped out into a sphere whose pure, cold, dazzling air Alma felt she could not breathe. Her hand strayed once during these thoughts to Agatha's letter lying on her lap, but she did not take it up. It was no use. It was too far off from her to be any help. The inward spiritual experiences it treated of were, for her, too unreal to have any comfort in them. Tears of real pain, but of the pathetic bearable sort still, came to her eyes as she murmured to herself—

"For this on death my wrath I wreak;

He put our lives so far apart we cannot hear each other speak."

Was the misfortune less when something else than death did this? when the body was left and the audible voice, and it was the soul that had gone too far off for thought to pass between it and those it had left? What silence was there so terrible as the silence that comes between souls that can no longer make each other understand however loud they speak, or however closely and lovingly they whisper in the ear? For ever, Alma said to herself, must this silence reign

between herself and her best-loved sister; and now Constance, her nursery companion, who had clung to her trembling a few hours ago, had been borne off—rather by the course of events, it seemed, than her own free will—into this unknown world of matrimony, to which certainly love had not given her a golden key. How would she fare in it? Was hers the substantial real world, and Agatha's only shadow; or was it just the other way? Was there a real world possible for those who, having tasted of the Sodom apples, had lost the power of distinguishing substance from shadow? Alma smiled with a little scorn of her self-scorn, as she asked the question, and then proceeded to justify it by a rapid survey of the lives she knew best—even Aunt West's, robbed of the spice of romance she had credited it with, beginning under false expectations, and ending in gloom. Her mother's, which to outsiders looked such a brilliant example of rewarded love; but from which, as she knew, love had long since been crowded out by hosts of uneasy cares and paltry ambitions. After all, since this same dust of care choked all roads alike, did it matter much by which gate one entered on one's destiny, love or worldly prudence? Had not Constance after all done well in ignoring the gate, and choosing what appeared the least up-hill road, strewn with fewest stones to hurt her feet?

Alma thought she was really pondering this problem in the abstract, and trying to give it a dispassionate answer; and, all the time, it was not Constance's decision she was looking at. Her thoughts, like birds on the wing, were hovering, but never settling round an application of the question that concerned herself. There it was in the distance, a very up-hill road, but the gate looked golden enough. She was not nearly ready for a decision yet. She might never be ready, she told herself, but meanwhile there was at least interest in glancing furtively that way sometimes. If she could but see

how the road would look a little further on. If the hand that offered the key would remove some stones out of the way she was required to walk in; if he would even leave off putting down fresh stones; or if—if—looking down into her soul she could find strength to choose the stony path, and find the same strange satisfaction in it that he seemed to find. Well—well—Constance's marriage, and yesterday's display, and the invitation sent to Lord Anstice, that was due to his cousin, were threads of circumstance certainly not drawing her *that* way. She saw how they were being woven about her, and wondered whether she like Constance, would wake up some day to find herself bound to a course she only half-approved by a million slender invisible threads, that could only be broken by the strength of a Hercules.

Alma had ample time for all these speculations, for this was one of the evenings when her father was not likely to return home till very late; and under pretext of fatigue she and her mother had decided on keeping on their afternoon dresses, and indulging in a second tea in the inner drawing-room, instead of dinner.

Lady Rivers dearly loved this indulgence, but sternly refused it to herself, except on rare occasions, for fear her servants should guess that its enjoyment consisted in its being a renewal of old habits. When, an hour later, she and Alma were sitting together, with a comfortable meal spread on a small table by the fire, and a knock came at the front door, her face showed an extremity of dismay at which Alma could not help smiling.

"Will Preston be so absurd as to let any one in?" she cried. "What o'clock is it, Alma? Only a quarter past eight! We could not be supposed to be taking tea after dinner, and with *patés* and jelly on the table, at this hour."

"Only a very charitable person would give us the benefit of such a

supposition, I am afraid, mamma. But don't be alarmed. I assure you I have seen Lady Forest sit down to tea on Sunday evening with a plate of radishes before her; and if our visitor at this untimely hour proves to be one of her set, I will take an opportunity of mentioning the circumstance."

"Pray don't be so absurd. Stay! It was not your father's knock; but surely that is his footstep on the stairs! What a comfort that it is only your father!"

But Lady Rivers rejoiced too soon. It was indeed the face of Lord Justice Rivers that appeared when the door opened; but other steps followed his to the inner room; and before she had finished her exclamations of surprise at her husband's unexpected return, Wynyard Anstice had shaken hands with Alma, and was making his way towards her, with a look on his face half deprecatory, half mischievously-triumphant, such as he used to confront her with in long past days, when he had been deputed by the school-room party to confess some desperate piece of mischief, in which all the juniors had been involved with him.

"I am perfectly aware I am doing what you don't like in coming here this evening," the look said; "but I don't mean you to be angry with me. I am throwing myself on the good-natured side of your character, in whose existence I always mean to believe, however much your actions towards me belie it."

She had never been able to resist feeling a sort of motherliness towards him, which his boyish confidence in her had called out in old times; and even now, vexed as she was, his winning face and manner conquered her again; and she shook hands and answered his inquiries after the newly-made Lady Forest with less coldness than had lately marked her attitude towards this least desirable of all Alma's lovers. She did not even attempt to telegraph her vexation on to her husband; there was no use in directing displeased glances towards

Sir Francis Rivers, for he never saw them. If he had ever listened to her hints about the undesirableness of encouraging Wynyard Anstice's intimacy with the family, he had utterly forgotten by this time that such words had ever been spoken; and now he sat down with a provoking smile of complacency on his face, satisfied that he had done a sensible thing in bringing home an old family friend, on a vacant evening, and thus securing pleasant occupation for the ladies of the house, while he was set free to enjoy the rare luxury of lounging in his easy chair with an uncut quarterly which he had already taken from a side table in passing, and was nursing lovingly on his knee.

"Ah," he said, glancing towards the table by the fire, and then at his wife, "I need not have dined at the club if I had known I should be released so early; we would have had high tea together, my dear, in memory of old days, and I might almost have fancied ourselves back in our chambers at Gate Street, when the children were babies, and dinners were luxuries reserved for high days."

Lady Rivers kept her face steadily turned towards the cup she was filling during this speech, and only Alma saw the beautiful look that shone from Wynyard Anstice's eyes towards her father. It stirred her with a vivid feeling that had pleasure, and a little pain in it too. She liked to see her father appreciated, above most things, but she was not sure that she wanted Wynyard Anstice to admire him exactly for the reason in his thoughts now. Encouragement in being unconventional and unworldly was precisely what Wynyard Anstice did not, in Alma's estimation, require. She might like these qualities in him ever so dearly far down in her inmost heart, but she saw, at the same time, that they would not aid him in paving the smooth path she sometimes dreamed they might walk in together. The next moments brought her unmixed pleasure, for, while her father sipped

his tea, keeping his finger all the while on the page in the quarterly he was longing to plunge into, he carried on a desultory conversation with his guest, from which it by and by appeared that an essay of Mr. Anstice's that had lately come out in a quarterly journal had attracted her father's attention, and won his unqualified approbation as being a masterly piece of reasoning, for once unspoiled by reference to any of his own particular crotchets. Alma even thought she observed a new air of respect in her father's manner, very different from the amused indulgence with which he had hitherto been in the habit of listening to young Anstice's arguments, when by and by a lively discussion grew out of this qualified praise. As she listened, turning her head from one speaker to the other, and now and then venturing to put in a playful word, a change seemed to come over her whole person; the cynical, weary look left her face; her brow cleared of its weight of discontent; her eyes took a new intensity of colour in their blue depths; the drooping mouth became full of spirit and tenderness. It was the look that was her father's, but with something higher added—a touch of enthusiasm that his face had lost. It was her highest self uppermost for the moment that looked out and showed to some eyes that noted it well what a stake it was for which the world and love were playing.

Meanwhile Lady Rivers was asking herself, "Could anything be more unfortunate?" Here was all her laborious twelve months' work in the way of being undone, by her husband, too! who professed—and, to do him justice, honestly intended—to leave the management of family politics in her hands! How it was that, with the reputation for wisdom the world gave him, he should show himself so thoroughly incompetent whenever he presumed to meddle in home affairs, was a standing puzzle to her, and constantly made her feel thankful that public business required so much less



delicate handling than private that her husband's blundering could there pass for discretion. If the government and the bar had had the same opinion of the Justice's ability that long experience had brought to his wife, where would the prosperity of the family have been? It was indeed well that the coarser texture of men's business was suited to their coarser wits. This reflection soothed the extremity of Lady Rivers's irritation, and enabled her to see that her own consummate prudence would be best shown to-night by standing aside, and letting the unfavourable current that had set in run its course. So when the happy moment came for the Justice, when, without rudeness, he could turn to his book, she established herself in a shady corner of the sofa, which always meant sleep, and saw Alma go to the piano, far away in the arctic regions of the great drawing-room, without a word of objection. Open love-making she knew she had not to fear, and other words, however deep an impression they might make on two hearts, might easily hereafter be explained away. It was, after all, only a desultory conversation that set in, in intervals between Alma's playing; a few sentences merged into the music, and then taken up again. Alma was not in the mood to begin upon one of the half-bantering, half-serious arguments which, for the last year or two, since she was quite grown up, had been the style of discourse she had usually fallen into with her old playmate, and she was afraid of getting any nearer to what Mr. Carlyle would call "sincere speech." It was not till after quite half an hour's music that she ventured on a remark bearing in any way on what she was thinking about. She had just brought Schumann's "Schlummerlied" to an end, and with her fingers resting on the keys, ready to dash into a waltz, if necessary, she said,

"I am glad you had the sense not to congratulate me when you came in to-day."

"I am a great deal too unhappy myself at another defection from our schoolroom party of long ago to think of such a thing. There will be no one of us left soon."

"Except myself. 'A scolding woman in a wide house.'"

"A queen who has driven all her subjects away, satisfied with the wide house," Anstice corrected, venturing a steady look into Alma's face, that was turned up to him with a half-mocking half-defiant expression on it.

"You think I have hectoring my sisters out of the house, and the poor boys too; what an opinion you must have of my temper to be sure."

"You know that was not what I was thinking."

"Well, but don't you want to know how we all looked and behaved yesterday?"

"Unexceptionally, I am sure; and, as for looks, I suppose none of you can have looked at the bride without thinking how strongly her likeness to your other sister came out under her white veil."

"How do you know? Your cousin could not have told you that."

"My own eyes did. You don't believe I should lose such an opportunity for a critical look at you all, do you? I was up in the gallery all the time watching and comparing."

"Comparing?"

"Yes, I may as well tell you at once what I called this evening principally to find an opportunity of saying to you. A fortnight ago I was in Paris staying with a friend whose wife has lately become an ardent Roman Catholic. She was full of a grand ceremony that was to take place at a convent near. I went with her, and through a phalanx of gratings, had a glimpse of your sister Agatha, in what I suppose was her last public appearance. I could not make out the ceremony. It seemed to me a sort of travesty of a wedding followed by a funeral, 'crowned and buried.' And your sister looked so like herself all the while that I had to rub my eyes



every now and then to be convinced I was not dreaming one of our old charade-actings over again."

"Do you think she saw you?"

"Oh, no, I was cooped up in a crowd behind close gratings. I don't suppose I had any right to be there; but my friend's wife had my edification strongly at heart, and stretched a point. I am afraid she is founding very false hopes on the interest she saw that the ceremony excited in me."

"Tell me again how Agatha looked—was it really as Constance looked yesterday?"

"I never thought them as much alike as other people did, you know, but yesterday when I had a moment's good view of your sister Constance, as she turned to you just before kneeling down, I could almost have thought myself in that convent chapel again, and that the face was Agatha's,—almost for an instant; the second impression, of course, was of the difference."

"Tell me about that."

"It is difficult to put into words."

"You must try, or you should not have begun to speak about it."

"Well, if I must, let me see. I think I can only say it was a difference in degree, something added to the Convent Bride's look. The fear on Constance's face was awe on Agatha's, and the clinging dependence which made yesterday's bride cast so many reluctant looks back on you, gave Agatha's eyes an inward expression, as if she were gathering strength by thought from some felt but unseen presence. I don't know which was the most beautiful after all; but Agatha's face was the thing to remember."

"And we were none of us there. I wonder if we should any of us have so much as seen all *that* if we had been there."

"So far apart we cannot hear each other speak."

The words rushed into Alma's mind again, and with them came quick tears, that having once been indulged refused

to be sent back to their source unshed. She turned her head as far from the light as possible, but could not conceal that in an instant her face was wet.

Lady Rivers would have been ready to faint with dismay, if she had roused herself at that moment from pleasant dreams to such a sight—Alma weeping silently, and Wynyard Anstice looking on with an intensity of sympathy and emotion on his always expressive face, that might well make her thankful for the blinding effect of tears on Alma. The danger to her was only momentary however. Mr. Anstice got up hastily and walked to a distant table, where, with his back to Alma, he stood nervously fingering the ornaments, and clasping and unclasping photograph books. It had been a great shock to him, and he had as much need of a struggle to get back into his ordinary drawing-room self as had Alma. He had never seen tears in her eyes in his life before, never. Not even in her childhood, when at partings, or meetings, or pathetic readings, which had moved her sisters to tears, she had always remained bright and defiant.

The times when in confidential talk her eyes had softened in his sight were epochs to be chronicled for the effect they had had far down in his inmost soul. He heard a large tear fall on one of the music-sheets she was gathering up in her hands, as his thoughts reached this point, and it sent a thrill through him. A thrill that was not all sympathy with her pain, there was a pang for himself as well as for her. When he had entered the room to-night he believed that a contest which had long disturbed his life was decided for ever, a victory won, and that he had only come to look once more on a lost love. What was there in this sudden rain of tears for Agatha to water the dead hopes, the buried unrest (which he had so congratulated himself on having securely buried) and cause them to spring up into life again stronger and greener than ever? Nothing absolutely. It was most unreasonable to feel that by revealing so

much of her soul to him Alma had laid a new claim on his devotion; but he did somehow so feel, and he could not all in a moment decide whether it was in pain or triumph that he took up the old burden again, resolving to carry it at all events a little further on the road. He only knew that each tear as it fell had struck on his heart and left a trace there that would not be easily worn out; whether it was destined to fester into one of those sore spots that make memory a torment or deepen and widen into a fountain of life-long joy. Alma was innocent of the smallest design or wish to excite so much emotion. She was deeply ashamed of her tears long before the power to restrain them came, and by the time she had strangled the last sob and brought her eyes into something like order the feeling that had called them forth had evaporated into an absorbing anxiety to look as usual when the now fast-approaching inevitable moment came, when Lady Rivers should awake from her nap and come into the room to end this perilous interview with such words of polite dismissal as she so well knew how to administer to an unwelcome guest. Alma's first sentence when she came up to the table and addressed Mr. Anstice was spoken in a light, indifferent tone that jarred strangely on his mood.

"You won't find any record of yesterday there," she began. "We were not guilty of having ourselves photographed in our wedding dresses. You had better question me unless you have heard all the gossip from your cousin already. I know you are quite capable of cross-examining him on the minutest details, for you always were the news-monger of our society."

He was silent, not being able at once to get back into a lightness of tone that would match hers; and Alma rattled on, throwing an accent of warning into her next sentence.

"Mamma, would you believe it? Mr. Anstice will not allow that he took enough interest in us to ask his cousin

how our wedding went off yesterday. Is such total lack of curiosity credible in him?"

Lady Rivers, who had entered the outer room just as Alma left the piano, now came forward into the circle of lamp-light with an expression of some anxiety on her face. Had maternal vigilance slept too long and given time for the occurrence of a frightful calamity? A glimpse at Alma's tear-stained face made her heart absolutely stand still, but turning to Wynyard she saw a look of pain on his that sent up her spirits many degrees at once. Was it even better than she had dared to hope? Had he spoken again, poor fellow? and had Alma, like a sensible, good girl, given him his final dismissal? That would indeed be fortunate, and leave the way clear and open for delicate schemes which her genius, now that Alma was the only one left to scheme for, was longing to elaborate. This pleasing supposition lent quite a motherly tone of interest to her voice and smile, as she turned to the young man, who had once long ago, in the character of her favourite son's safest comrade, shared her matronly solicitude to a certain small extent.

"We know Mr. Anstice's friendly feeling towards the family too well," she said, "not to be sure that nothing but a really pressing engagement would have prevented his being with us, or, at all events, full of thought for us on such an important day."

"I had no engagement. I did not come to you yesterday because I was not asked," he said, looking full at her. Lady Rivers did not expect such a bold thrust even from Wynyard Anstice's unconventional sincerity, but she was equal to the occasion.

"We hardly thought a formal invitation necessary with you, as our note to your cousin warned you of the day; but, however, you did not lose anything by not coming. We were all too sad to be pleasant company, and even Sir Francis broke down in his speech. Your cousin will have told you."

"I have not seen him since yesterday morning."

"He was very undutiful then," cried Alma, whose cheek had burned under her mother's implied falsehood, and who was longing to put an end to the conversation. "He told me he meant to report himself to you on the first moment of his release, and seemed perfectly aware that his *raison d'être* was to see everything with your eyes and carry it to you."

Mr. Anstice smiled "I know you have a theory of your own about my cousin's character; but now you know him better, don't you see more in him than the sort of devoted Smike you chose to fancy him in old days?"

"Smike! Oh no. I never thought of anything so raucy. My types for you and your cousin were taken from a tale of Madame de Genlis's we used to read in the schoolroom—*Alphonse and Thelismar*—the *dérégulé* young French noble and his philosophical friend, who brought him back to reason by discourses on nature and the general course of things."

"I hope yesterday made you ashamed of the inexactness of your portrait-painting then."

"Well, I will confess I was a little disappointed. Lord Anstice did not talk so much like Alphonse as I had expected, nor display so much devotion to Thelismar as (lowering her tone)—I perhaps think past and present circumstances warrant."

"I have always told you you misunderstand those same circumstances."

Lady Rivers did not hear the lowered tones, but she had caught the word disappointed and could not resist putting in a word on a subject which was always more or less in her thoughts whenever she saw Alma and Wynyard Anstice together.

"You must not be surprised if we all feel a little disappointed on first acquaintance with your cousin. We naturally expect a great deal from a person in whose favour, as it seems to us, you voluntarily cut yourself off

from all your prospects in life and from your older friends."

It was meant for a stinging reproach to Wynyard, but all the pain it gave came to Alma. To him it was almost incomprehensible, so distorted was the view of the facts to which it alluded. Some years ago when the Riverses first knew him, he and his younger cousin had been equally dependent for education and advancement in life on the head of their family, a bachelor uncle, with an old title and large unentailed estates. The younger and the least promising had represented the elder branch and was heir to the title, but Wynyard had always been his uncle's favourite, and was looked upon as likely to inherit the larger portion of his wealth, till a few months before the old man's death, when he managed to quarrel with him on some abstract questions of principle and conduct, and so offended him by maintaining his own contrary views, on a public occasion, that he was never received into favour again. When a little later the uncle died and the will came to be read it was found that the despotic old man had heaped the whole of his great wealth on the nephew who, though less satisfactory in conduct, had allowed his theories to be prescribed for him, and left the one best liked to fight out a position in the world he had elected to live in after fashions of his own.

This change in Mr. Anstice's circumstances had occurred about two years ago, just at the time when his attachment to Alma began to be talked about; and Lady Rivers never could forgive the part he had acted in ruining himself. If a totally unattached young man of her acquaintance chose to be quixotic, and recklessly throw away the good gifts fortune had designed for him, a quiet pity for his folly, and a resolute avoidance of him in future, was all the notice that it was necessary for her to take of his misconduct. But when the young man had already taken the liking of a girl of good position into his keeping, and when that girl

was her own most attractive daughter, the indignation that swelled her motherly heart was too bitter to be quietly borne. It was always waking up and rousing her into expressions of hostility that her better judgment deprecated—the more so as Alma could never be made to express satisfactory condemnation of her lover's conduct. Yet the invectives were not altogether lost. Alma did not acquiesce when her mother told her again and again that Wynyard Anstice's real care to win her was to be estimated by the lightness with which he had thrown away the conditions that made such winning possible; but the words rankled and made a sore wound in her mind that winced whenever it was touched. The pain she felt just now stung her into something like defiance, and determined her to persevere in the low-toned talk it was meant to interrupt.

"I am really sorry you did not see your cousin yesterday afternoon," she said; "I had given him a message for you, and he promised me to look you up, in whichever of your haunts you might be."

"The haunt which actually held me was one where I don't think his courage would have been sufficient to induce him to follow me. At the time when your party broke up, I was speaking in a lecture-room in an out-of-the-way place in the east end, at a meeting convened to discuss woman's suffrage, among other social questions."

Alma's face clouded again; every fresh instance of Mr. Anstice's disposition to take up unpopular subjects, struck her as a sort of slight to herself.

"How can you go to such places? making people talk of you, and hindering your getting on in your profession, and lowering papa's opinion of your good sense. Why can't you give up such freaks now?" she asked, putting a greater amount of pleading in her voice than she was quite aware of.

"I did not intend to take part in the discussion when I went in; I was

moved to it by what I thought unfair hostility shown towards a lady, who got up in the body of the meeting and pleaded woman's rights, not so much to votes as to wider spheres of work, in a speech that was a good deal above the heads of most of the people there. I will confess, however, that I was struck with her remarks before the row began, and with herself too, for she was no common-looking person, I can tell you, in spite of the company she had got herself among. Perhaps some people—I don't say myself, but some people—might even have thought it worth while to miss a wedding breakfast for the sake of hearing and seeing her."

"Then I suppose she is young and handsome, in spite of *Punch's* last week's picture. But she must be a monster to go to a meeting of rough people, and get up and speak. I can't think how you can defend such conduct."

"I don't defend it; I only say that being present I was struck with what she said, and how she looked while saying it."

"So handsome?"

"No, not at all handsome, but a very unforgettable face all the same."

"Did you make out her name?"

"I heard it spoken by some people near, Miss Moore—Katharine Moore, I believe they called her; and as you seem curious about her looks, here is an outline sketch I took of her, before I grew too much interested in what she was saying, to do anything but listen."

"Katharine Moore—"

Alma repeated the name musingly, as she examined a pocket-book page, on which was sketched hastily, but effectively, a strongly-featured expressive face, with dark level brows, wide forehead, full well-shaped mouth, and indented chin.

"Katharine Moore—how strange—I believe she must be the elder of the two sisters to whom Aunt West—"

Alma stopped short, arrested by an agonised look from her mother; and

Lady Rivers finished her sentence—  
 “One of the orphans whom my sister, Mrs. West, has received into her house as companions to her daughter.”

“Poor little Emmie West,” said Alma, quickly to stop further explanation, “how will she like companions who get themselves into rows at public meetings, I wonder. I must go and look her up, I think, now that all our gaieties are over.”

“Miss West,” cried Anstice. “Ah! she was not at the wedding any more than myself then? Why should not I look her up, that we may condole with each other, and then perhaps,” (with a malicious smile towards Alma) “I shall see my lady orator again.”

Mr. Anstice took his departure soon after this, and Alma got a lecture from her mother for making her eyes red, for showing too much interest in Wynyard Anstice's doings, and for bringing in her aunt's name in conversation, with people who did not belong to the family. How strange it was that she who was reputed so clever should make more mistakes than Constance ever did, and never allow her mother the repose of feeling she might be trusted.

It certainly had not been a pleasant evening; and yet Alma, as she sat staring into her bedroom fire before going to bed, felt not happier, perhaps, but fuller of life than she had felt for many long days. The hurry of engagements and gaieties in which she lived had lately been growing so meaningless and vapid to her, it was a comfort to be raised out of its dust, even by sensations of pain—pain of such sort at least as this evening's reflections, and the sight of Wynyard Anstice had brought with it. It was not a new pain, nor even a new light upon it, only the old puzzle that she had pondered again and again. Could he really love her, so very much as his eyes sometimes said, when his own hand had put away the right to ask for her, and when even now he was putting all manner of crotchets before the purpose of climbing quickly up again to

such a height as would enable her to look upon him with favour once more. If Alma had been asked if she could appreciate the sentiment of the poet-soldier, who sang

“I could not love thee, dear, so much,  
 Loved I not honour more,”

she would have answered, “Yes, certainly;” but then surely *that* meant honour such as the world could recognise—honour that could be reflected back in a halo round the beloved head; not subtle scruples like these, self-sacrifices that nobody asked—delicate weighings of more or less worth in work for the world, such as the world would never understand, and that were due to some overstrained unrecognised sense of duty to powers out of sight.

Surely such mere floating thought-motes as these ought to be blown away by the strong gusts of passion? What was the worth of a love that barriers unseen by most eyes could hold back? Sadly, after long musing, Alma gave the old answer to this question, and then she knelt down and went through her prescribed round of evening devotions, not recognising that the decision she had just come to was a distinct denial of there being any unseen Presences to pray to.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE VALLEY OF HUMILIATION.

THE clinging damp of a rainy November evening, while it stayed outside well-fenced houses, like Lady Rivers's, crept uncomfortably through and through the ground-floor rooms of a large scantily-furnished, ill-warmed, and ill-lighted house at the opposite end of London. It brought out a slimy perspiration on the passage walls and hung misty halos round the dim gas-burners, so that they seemed to have withdrawn themselves miles away, and to be acting as signals in a fathomless distance. Perhaps it was the uncomfortable impression of



desolate space thus created, which made the two occupants of one of the largest of these ground-floor rooms, sit close together on an old-fashioned couch ranged against the wall, apparently a mile or two from the fire-place, where a black fire, built up to give out heat some time, but not now, smouldered dully. Quite out of the way of heat and light these two persons had been sitting for at least an hour, and if they were not chilled to the bone, it must have been owing to a certain soft glow of love-light which shone from their eyes whenever in the course of a confidential low-toned talk they had looked at each other. Two pairs of velvety-brown eyes these were which thus interchanged love-light; too exactly alike in shape and colour, and sweep of silken lashes to belong to lovers in the ordinary sense of that word, and having just the contrast of expression lovingly trustful and lovingly anxious, which might be expected from the actual relationship of their owners. Mother and daughter, the one a thin, worn, sad-looking woman, the other a vigorous bright girl, whose face, full of delicate colouring and light, spoke of an eager temperament and naturally gay spirits toned just now to seriousness by the quick sympathy that reflected every mood of those she loved.

Something very important had to be decided, something which so far as the conversation had gone at present, threatened equal pain to her mother, whichever way it was settled; and as Emmie West leaned her soft pink cheek against her mother's worn forehead, her velvety eyes (now that all the arguments she could think of had come to an end), had a sorrowful dumb entreaty in them, which her mother felt without being able to satisfy.

"Do make up your mind to choose the least painful course, and *do* be as little unhappy as possible about it," the yearning eyes hungry for a little joy, said, and sad-hearted Mrs. West stooped down and kissed them, not having any more satisfactory answer

to give to this appeal—an appeal which she was apt to read in her children's eyes many times every day. It was not so much that she had lost the art of making the best of things, but that another influence stronger than even her children's, perpetually forced her to look on the gloomy side.

Life had been hard on Mr. West, on the husband who had in her youth honoured her by thrusting unexpected elevation upon her, and now that the world had turned against him, she felt it would be disloyal in her to see anything but gloom in a state of things in which he had fared so ill. Who had he to feel with him but herself?—not even his children, poor, thoughtless, light-hearted things; and how could his sorrows be adequately mourned, unless her heart were always bleeding? If now and then, on rare occasions, when Mr. West was away, and not likely to return for a longer interval than usual, she was drawn on by her eldest son's gay, good temper, and her daughter's sweet coaxing, to listen to the young people's schemes for the future (in which, to be sure, there was never any mention made of Mr. West), and she let her thoughts take a slight tinge of rose colour from their inexperienced hopefulness, her conscience always smote her afterwards, and she reproached herself, as if her momentary escape from gloom had been an act of unfaithfulness to her husband. Just now, however, there was no question of escape. Mr. West might be expected home any minute (the fire was ready to be broken up into a blaze, when his foot was heard on the scraper), and she and Emmie were tremblingly discussing the safest way of accomplishing a sacrifice she was contemplating on his behalf which must be so carried out, that, while he profited by it, he should never have the least idea that it had been made for him.

"My dear, I don't think I can make up my mind to-night," Mrs. West was saying. "We had better lock up the box again, and put it back on my dressing-table before your father



comes in. I would not have him go up stairs and miss it, and find out what we have been talking about for the world."

"Mamma, I wonder—" Emmie began hesitatingly—paused—and then hurried on as if half afraid of what she was saying. "Mamma, I wonder whether it might not be better after all to do it openly. Why should you have the pain of parting with your treasures, and the fright as well, which half kills you, of pretending to have got them all the same? Why should not papa know? Perhaps he would leave off expecting so much if he quite understood what a hard struggle it is for you to provide the little luxuries you say are so necessary for him. Let me go on, dear, and say what I have on my mind just this once. I don't think it is a fair division for you to have all the giving up, and all the pain of concealment as well. Katherine Moore says that women ought not to do such things; that they should act openly and independently, and then they would not be trampled upon."

"Trampled upon?" A look of almost wild horror flitted across Mrs. West's face. "Oh, Emmie, my dear, how could she have such a thought about me? You must not get it into your head, darling, or it will make me feel very wicked, as if I had terribly misrepresented things as they stand between your father and me. Trampled upon! Don't you understand, darling, that there is nothing I don't *want* to do for him and all of you? If letting myself be trampled upon would do any good, and keep humiliation from him and you, there would be no pain in it. It would not degrade me. The pain is that I am such a useless person, and can do so little to serve him and you all."

"It seems to me that you do everything, and bear all the pain."

"That is because I talk about it like a woman, and your father is silent to everybody but me; but, oh Emmie, he suffers for us all! I read the bitter pain that cuts down to the

very bottom of his soul whenever he is made aware of any fresh privation we have to bear. It hurts him and humbles him down to the ground, though he can only show what he feels by short, sharp words. I understand, if you younger ones don't; and, darling, we will struggle to spare him little mortifications as long as we can; when there is nothing more to be done we will sit still and bear the will of God. Perhaps when we have done all we can, the worst, if it comes, will bring a sort of peace."

"Or good fortune will come at last; and mamma you must not say that we young ones don't feel for papa. Harry does at all events. I really think he is almost as anxious to keep disagreeable things from papa's sight, and to provide against his being crossed in his fidgets, as you are. Do you know that ever since old Mary Anne refused to clean knives and shoes for lodgers, Harry has got up an hour earlier, and gone down stairs, and done all that part of the work before any one else is up? This puts Mary Anne into such good humour, that she takes pains with the breakfast again, and sends up the one rasher, and the two bits of toast, and the thick bread-and-butter, with as much ceremony as if it were a Lord Mayor's feast. You have not been down stairs to see lately, but I assure you papa has looked almost satisfied, and yesterday he actually remarked that his boots were well blacked, and supposed we had got a new boy, and Sidney was so tickled at the idea, Harry had to kick him under the table to keep him from exploding. It's all Harry's doing, and I do believe he does it quite as much for papa's sake, as for yours."

"My own boy," said Mrs. West, fervently; and as she spoke her worn face glowed, and a smile broke over it, obliterating for a moment its lines of care and pain, and making it almost as fair and young as Emmie's.

"But you won't love him better than me," said Emmie, pretending to

pout; "that would not be a good return for my giving myself up to you body and soul, and seeing only you in the world, would it, mother darling? I agree with Katherine Moore that women can understand and love each other best, and should stick to each other through thick and thin. Let the men fight for themselves, and help themselves, I say. I will take care of you, mother."

"Well then, dearest, I ought not to think of myself as poorer than your poor Aunt Rivers, who seems to be in the way of losing all her daughters, while I am to keep mine."

"And, mamma," cried Emmie, eagerly, "that is another reason for your making up your mind to-day about the necklace. I forgot to mention it before, but it is a reason."

"Your never meaning to leave me, darling?"

"No, but my not having been invited to Constance's wedding. I will confess something to you, mother. I have often thought I should like to wear that necklace just once. I remember how I used to admire it when I was a little child, and you put it on to go out with papa to some grand party, and he used to come out of his dressing-room, when you were ready, and look—you know how, mamma, as he never looks now—proud of you, and of everything about him. I used to think then that wearing a pearl necklace meant being grown up, and beautiful, and perfectly happy. When I heard that Constance Rivers was engaged to be married, it did come into my mind that I might be asked to be one of her bridesmaids, and that perhaps Aunt Rivers would give me a dress such as would not disgrace the necklace, and that, for once, I could have looked so that the Riverses need not be ashamed of me. But the opportunity has passed, you see. I was not invited to the wedding, and I don't now believe I ever shall be asked to the Rivers's on any grand occasion; they look down upon us too much now. The necklace had

better go, and not tantalise us any longer by lying idle in the jewel box. I should not wonder, if after paying all these bills, and buying what you want for papa, and putting aside a little fund for emergencies, we might get a new floorcloth for the front hall out of the money the sale will bring. It would be a real load off my mind if we could do that, for I am quite certain the old one can't be put down again after another spring cleaning. Imagine our feelings if Aunt Rivers or the new Lady Forest were to call here some day and have to put their feet absolutely on bare boards. I don't think we should ever get Aunt Rivers into the sitting-room, she would faint in the hall; and I am sure no one in this house could carry her back into her carriage. We should never hear the last of it."

"My darling, it was of your own wedding day, not of Constance Rivers's, that I have thought, when I have many a time put back the necklace into its case, through sore needs of selling it we have struggled out of. Your father gave it me on the day you were christened, and I have a feeling that it is robbing you to send it away. I should have liked him to clasp it round your neck before he gave you away to any one."

"Mamma," said Emmie, after a moment's pause, with a richer flush than usual on her cheek, but a resolute tone of reasonableness in her voice, "Katherine Moore says it is quite time that girls left off looking upon marriage as the one object of their existence. She says it is an accident of life that occurs now to fewer and fewer women every year, and that girls should plan their lives without any reference to it whatever."

"I am afraid very few of them will do so, my dear, in spite of Katherine Moore."

"But at all events I can, mamma," said Emmie, sitting a little more upright, and pushing her soft brown hair from her forehead, with a decided little gesture that had perhaps been

caught from Katherine Moore. "I can make up my mind to look at things as they really are, and face them resolutely without deluding myself with vain expectations. Now let us consider, dear. I hardly ever go anywhere except now and then to drink tea in the 'land of Beulah,' and that counts for nothing, as Mrs. Urquhart only asks me when she is alone. And if by a rare chance I do get an invitation to an evening party, and accept it, I am always sorry afterwards, for I don't feel at home among the other girls when I am there. It can't be helped, mother dear. I have not sat or stood in corners at Aunt Rivers's Christmas parties without finding out exactly how everybody looks at one when one has on the shabbiest dress in the room. Last Christmas a gentleman found me out in my corner, and sat talking to me a long time, and I thought perhaps he found me rather nice till Alma came and explained to me that Mr. Anstice was something of an oddity himself, and always made a point of talking to the person in the company most likely to be overlooked by everybody else. It was ever so nice of him, but it was not the kind of compliment that encourages one to go out again, was it, mamma?"

"My darling, you know I would spare you Aunt Rivers's parties if I could, since I can't dress you for them as I should like; but—but—if Aunt Rivers took offence at my keeping you away, and your father were to begin to suspect her of slighting us—"

"Ah, yes, I know; and besides, dear mamma, I generally like the thought of the party beforehand well enough; and Alma is sometimes kind; or if not, and the reality is worse than I looked for, I can always now run up to 'Air Throne' the next morning, and laugh over my mortifications with the two Moores, till I get not to care for them. I was not complaining, mother, dear; but I want you to face the real state of things; give up impossible

hopes, and sell the necklace. It won't be wanted *ever* for such a day as you fancied; but we shall have other happy days—great days for the boys perhaps, or even for me, in some other way than marriage. You should hear how the Moores talk. Till these good times come there is a great deal of pleasure to be got out of the world, even in shabby clothes, and with all our worries and troubles, if you, mother, would only pluck up your courage again. Very nice bits come in between whiles for us young ones. Fun in the back sitting-room of evenings, while you and papa are sitting here dolefully; and delicious talks with the Moores in 'Air Throne,' and cosy times with dear old Mrs. Urquhart in the 'Land of Beulah.' Does it not sometimes make you dread misfortune a little less when you see that our great crisis—the crisis that you thought would break your heart—of our having to take lodgers into our house, has ended in making us happier. At least, I know I am a great deal happier since the Moores came; and Harry and the boys have quite got over the little mortification it was to them at first, in the fun of giving odd names to the new divisions of the house. If Aunt Rivers chooses to be ashamed of us, and to send us to Coventry, we can bear it; and you won't think us unsympathising, will you, dear, for being able to get a little amusement out of what seemed such a terrible sorrow at first!"

Mrs. West thought of the contraction that came on her husband's brow whenever, in the course of their long, silent evenings, the sound of a bell from the upper story reminded him that he was no longer sole master of the house in which he had been born, but she could not quench the light in Emmie's beautiful eyes by such an allusion.

"Whatever makes you happy is good for me," she said, gently, stroking her daughter's hair back into its usual becoming waves over her forehead, and thus obliterating the little attempt to look like Katherine Moore

that had its terrors for her, though she said nothing about it. "I am sure I hope the Moores' coming will prove good for us all. As your cousins keep so much out of the way, I like you to have other companions."

"Friends," corrected Emmie, eagerly; "friends who will do more for us than all the Riverses put together ever would. Mamma, if you do not mind my telling Katherine about the necklace, I believe her advice will be very useful. She gives lessons on two evenings in the week to a young man who is a working jeweller, and I dare say he could tell us what the necklace is really worth, or even manage the sale for us, if you liked to trust him. I know you don't wish Harry to have anything to do with it."

"My dear, I hope the young man does not come here. What would your father say if he met him, and heard that one of the young lady lodgers gave him lessons? He would think it a monstrous thing! He would want us to turn the Moores out of the house at once. I had no idea myself that Katherine gave lessons to young men—and shopmen too."

"Dear mamma, she thinks nothing of it. You must not judge the Moores as you would anybody else. They are to be judged in quite a different way; and no one but Katherine can explain it. However, you need not be at all uneasy. She never brings any of her pupils up to 'Air Throne'—that is Christabel's shrine—to draw and write and paint in. Katherine would not desecrate it, she says, by bringing drudgery there. She goes out to give her lessons, and I believe this is one of the evenings. Let me take the jewel-case to her and speak about it now; in another minute papa will come in; and I am sure you

will feel happier for having come to a decision. It may be a long time before you and I can have such another long uninterrupted talk, and it would be a pity to let it go for nothing. Would you like to look at the necklace, and say good-bye to it before it goes, mamma?"

Emmie's finger, as she spoke, was on the spring of the purple case which she had previously taken from the box on her knee, and her eyes looked pleasantly expectant, but her mother made a hasty negative gesture.

"No, no, dear, I don't want to look at it again. I said good-bye to all that it means for me a long, long time ago; and if you are not to wear it, I had rather never see it. Put the case into your pocket, and carry it to Katherine while papa and I are at dinner. If we women can manage the matter among ourselves, I shall be thankful. My conscience will be easier for not having drawn Harry into our little conspiracy, since I must conceal it from your father for the present. There, is not that papa's step outside?—run away, dearest—run away, and put the jewel-box exactly in its usual place on my dressing-table, so that there may be nothing to strike your father's eye when he goes into the room to dress for dinner. I shall tell him that I have been obliged to part with the necklace, some day, Emmie, dear; but I want to spare him the pain of knowing exactly when it was done, and of following us in all the painful little details of the business. The loss is his as well as ours, but we can spare him part of the degradation. Yes, run away, Emmie, dear, and leave me alone. Your father likes best now to find me alone here when he first comes in, weary and out of spirits."

*To be continued.*

## IDYLLIC POETRY.

THERE are flowers whose beauty needs no discoverer. A tangle of white roses, creeping up the arms of an ancient yew, a regiment of lilies in a cottage garden—these, and such as these, cannot escape notice. Whoever passes that way in his daily walks must see them, unless the seeing eye has been denied him. They command attention and admiration. There is no need of sending worshippers to their shrine. But if perchance some lover of flowers knows where to find the ivy-leaved campanula, or, better still, if he can tell of a spot under fragrant fir-trees where the tall gentian hides its delicate blue blossoms among thick masses of heath, we may thank him for the tidings, for we might live long in the neighbourhood and never chance upon these hidden beauties.

So in the world of poetry. There are poems which cannot be compared to any single flower, but rather to the tops of a tropical forest, filled with light, motion, and colour. These belong to the epic order. Others are small, and make a single impression, but are perfect in form, colour, and fragrance, like the rose. Such are many lyrical poems, which live in the remembrance of every reader. These do not require to be discovered by a wanderer in bye-paths. But there are flowers which not every one loves, and some who pass them by would pronounce their form insignificant, their tints faded, their scent unpleasing. The discovery of their charms is the reward of the careful and close observer. So there are poems which are special favourites with a few but which others count as slight and fanciful, best left in obscurity. The judgment of the majority sets this mark upon idyllic poetry. Even the greatest poems in this order have not been universally admired. But, as the observer of nature will bring a friend

to the flower which, as he thought, gave a nymph-like grace to the copse, lent a special charm to the moor, or lit up the river bank, so the reader of poetry will try to impart to others the pleasure he has received.

Definitions are always difficult to frame, and in matters of poetry often impossible. Idyllic poetry cannot be defined in terms that would satisfy a logician. It were as easy to describe a mass of cloud and shower once seen passing along the mountainous coast across an arm of the sea, with a square block of hill in black shadow to the left, while the rounded mist and streaming rain were lit with wonderful yet delicate colours—no positive tints like those of a sunset—but a marvellous inweaving of subtlest harmonies. It was a sight to see, to remember, to dream of; not to describe, scarcely even for the genius of Turner himself to paint. Neither can idyllic poetry be defined, for the effects on which it depends are often equally subtle. Idyllic poems cannot be caught, and penned, like a flock of sheep in a pound, until they are all numbered. The idyll has a habit of breaking bounds, and may be found now and then in epic territory. The idyllic sentiment is not unfrequently to be seen in lyrical poetry, and sometimes an epigram looks decidedly idyllic.

There is no outward and visible sign separating idyllic from epic poetry, except the apparently trivial mark of length. The idyll cannot be long, neither can the true epic be short. The sweep and mighty current which are necessary characteristics of the latter are characteristically absent from the former. On this side, as, perhaps in a less degree, on the other, the distinction must be felt rather than seen. The idyll is less elevated in tone than the epic, less



intense than lyrical poetry. This may best be shown where two of the kinds are brought into vivid contrast. Thus Milton, the greatest English master of the idyll as of the epic, introduces some score of epic lines into his *Lycidas*, beginning—

“Last came, and last did go,  
The pilot of the Galilean lake;”

and ending with the stern allusion to false shepherds, the grim wolf, and “that two-handed engine at the door.” This is a “strain of higher mood;” and the poet, who on another occasion,

“Intends to soar  
Above the Aonian mount,”

quickly brings back the strings to the former key. How clearly, with his poet's tact, he feels and notes the change!

“Return, Alpheus; the dread voice is past  
That shrunk thy streams: return, Sicilian  
    muse,  
And call the vales, and bid them hither  
    cast  
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand  
    hues.”

If we find here the bucolic pipe sounding unwonted notes, we may observe also in epic poems that a restful change is produced by idyllic passages. A fine example is the description of the shield in the Eighteenth *Iliad*.

The most obvious distinction between idyllic and lyrical poetry lies in the metre. This may seem a highly artificial method of distinguishing the two, but it is not so altogether. Idyllic poetry avoids intensity and rapid motion. Lyrics are usually both intense and rapid, and being cast into corresponding metres, may commonly be identified at a glance. It is possible for some portion of the idyllic sentiment to wander into lyric poetry, but it can hardly find proper expression in lyric measures.

The most perfect metre for idylls in ancient languages is the hexameter, as modified for the purpose by Theocritus. In modern languages, perhaps with

the exception of German, the dactylic hexameter is intolerable. It is, therefore, replaced on the *cy près* principle, by modifications of the heroic measures.

The older masters of the idyll—Clement Marot, Spenser, Milton—vary their verse to a considerable extent, and do almost everything except transgress into the epic region on the one hand, or the lyric on the other. Mr. Tennyson keeps usually to the five iambic feet. Mr. Matthew Arnold adopts the stanza. But I know of no instance in which a good poet uses metres for idyllic purposes which are not idyllic, *i.e.*, which are too stately on the one hand or too lively on the other, except, indeed, where he may vary his key for a moment, or may introduce a song, as Spenser does his fourth *Æclogue*.

But another note of the idyll is that it always tells or hints at more or less of a story. Something of human interest, something more than the expression of a bare sentiment, is always introduced; and, bearing this in mind, we shall be able rationally to distinguish some poems from idylls, which otherwise we could only feel to belong to a different order.

The idyll is a little picture, a poem imparting a single impression, or describing a single scene. So far the definition would include many lyrical poems. Take, for example, the following from Shelley:—

“A widow bird sat mourning for her love  
Upon a wintry bough;  
The frozen wind kept on above,  
The freezing stream below.  
There was no leaf upon the forest bare,  
No flower upon the ground;  
And little motion in the air  
Except the mill-wheel's sound.”

The passion, the rapidity, the intensity, which usually distinguish lyrical from idyllic poetry are here absent. This exquisite little poem is essentially picturesque. Or rather, perhaps, it resembles the effect produced by music. No clear intellectual idea is conveyed by the poet to the reader. Scarcely is a definite picture suggested



to his mind. It is a sentiment which is conveyed. The poem is the wire along which the current passes, causing the reader to feel with the writer.

What definite idea does a sonata of Beethoven suggest? It is dangerous to say; but it affects you as he meant it should. So with this and many other poems of Shelley. But we must not suppose because they are undefined, suggestive, uninformed by strong passion, that they are therefore idyllic. The metre is lyrical rather than idyllic; yet in this case the metre is perhaps hardly decisive. Intensity there is, as always in Shelley, who is an essentially lyric poet. Yet the intensity is here subdued and kept well below the surface. It might, therefore, be contended, and it has even been argued, that this is a good example of an idyll. It may rather be compared with Greek epigrams of the lyric class, which pass into lyrical poems by shades too gradual for definition. Take for example this translation from Sappho, given by Mr. Dodd in his "Epigrammatists."

"The cool, low-babbling stream,  
Mid quince-groves deep,  
And gently-rustling leaves,  
Bring on soft sleep."

It is true that this is but a fragment of a longer poem, the remainder of which is lost to us. Still the fragment is perfect in itself, and for our purposes may be quoted as though the poetess had written only so much as Hermogenes has preserved. So taken, it forms an exact parallel to the poem of Shelley quoted above.

Each suggests a picture, and conveys a sentiment much after the fashion of music. Both are picturesque, subdued, and tranquil; and so far approach the idyllic type. But their metre, shortness, and, above all, the absence of direct human interest, forbid us to class them with the idyll proper. No poem, which is merely sentimental, or which gives a picture of still life, can be properly reckoned as idyllic.

This distinction will, perhaps, be better understood by reference to an

example. Mr. Clough has a very beautiful poem, the undersong of which is the line—

"Home, Rose, and home, Provence and La Palie;"

in which he describes a French girl driving home her cows and thinking of an absent lover. In this very good, and even typical, specimen of the idyll, the characteristics marking it off from the last quoted poems are plainly to be seen. The pastoral element is retained, a story of human interest is hinted, and the little picture is set in charming natural scenery. A description of French mountains capped with snow, and a thunderstorm rolling up in the valley, would in no case have been an idyll. Had the action of the poem been made more vivid, ending in some catastrophe, it might have become a ballad. As it is it remains an idyll, neither more nor less, and very charming in its kind.

From considering what the idyll is not, I have been led to give an example of what it is, or rather may be. For idyllic poetry is a wide and subdivided field; and, if Mr. Clough's poem be typical, as has been asserted, it is not meant that all idylls are to be referred to it as the standard. It belongs to one division, and is rather a good example to take, because, while perfect in its kind, it approaches in tone and treatment to another division. Idyllic poems fall into three classes. The first contains those idealized poems, which are usually called pastoral, in which country life is described, not as it is, but as it is poetically imagined to be; and imaginary characters are introduced, either for poetical purposes simply or with a veiled but easily understood allusion to real and living persons. The second is realistic, giving a picture of actual life. To this division Mr. Clough's poem clearly belongs, since it describes nothing that may not be conceived as having actually happened. The third, which may be treated as a subdivision of the first, is composed of memorial idylls.

I take the second of these divisions

first, and for this reason: I wish if possible to induce my readers to do justice to the idyll, and would therefore approach them by the side where prejudice is least strong. It will be well, therefore, to abstain at first from saying much about imaginary shepherds, and the rest of pastoral symbolism, the bare mention of which will make some critics stand to their arms. Let me rather say that the idyll need not be pastoral at all, and very often is realistic enough to satisfy the most practical of the dwellers in Gath. Be it admitted, then, that the idealized idyll, or pastoral poem, had until lately fallen into discredit, from which, perhaps, it has not wholly recovered. The words "idyllic sentiment" are sometimes even now used—as by Mr. Mackenzie Wallace in his *Russia*—as the equivalent of something wholly fanciful and unreal. This fall was the effect of the reaction naturally consequent upon the abuse of idyllic symbolism. Clement Marot is a poet whom not many would care to read in the original. But since Mr. Henry Morley published a charming sketch of him and his work, every one ought to know that Marot set the fashion in his day of disguising real personages under the idyllic mask. He wrote of himself as a shepherd, of the king as Pan, of the persecuting dignitaries of the Church as wolves. Spenser copied Marot pretty closely in the *Shepherd's Calendar*. But the conceit, which was charming in those older poets, was afterwards worn threadbare by over use. The reasons which made it desirable to disguise allusions to fact under the likeness of fable passed away; and the symbolism which had covered stern realities was decked with ribbons and set up for admiration in the court of love. Every small poet was constantly appealing to imaginary shepherds to tell him, tell him what had become of his shepherdess, until people became heartily tired of Strephon and Chloe, with their sheep, crooks, and fal-lals.

Pope, in his *Discourse on Pastoral*

*Poetry*, says—"There are not a greater number of any sort of verses than those called pastorals, nor a smaller of those which are truly so." His early efforts must be classed with the majority, and only succeeded in showing that the age could not produce excellence of this kind. A great admirer of Pope, William Shenstone, thought himself entitled to use pastoral imagery, because he lived retired in the country, or, in his own phrase, "vacant in the rural cave," marked "The lab'ring hind invert the soil," and had leisure to prophesy that—

"Elegance, with coy, judicious hand,  
Shall cull fresh flow'rets for Ophelia's tomb."

His verses gave evidence of a gentle, kindly nature, but of very little more, and he contributed to bring round the time when a reader, on seeing a pastoral ode, would immediately shut the book. Metaphor is not necessarily insincere, but in the hands of poets of that age it became so. The curtain was the picture. Art was not disguised, nor did it in turn disguise a reality of genuine feeling.

Pastoral poetry came to have Watteau for its painter, and took the style of the *siècle* Louis Quatorze, where—

"All is glistening show,  
Like the idle gleam that December's beam  
Can dart on ice and snow."

Idyllic sentiment, idyllic painting, and idyllic poetry were appropriated by the French court, and became hollow, rouged, and false, like it. We have long since escaped from the glamour of those enchantments, and are beginning to recover from the reaction which followed them.

But for the great benefit, and with a view to the gradual education of those who imagine that *Sèvres* china shepherds and shepherdesses haunt all idyllic poetry, the fact must be established that idylls are not necessarily pastoral, nor are pastoral poems necessarily unreal. In idyllic poetry an incident may be described having no relation whatever to oxen and

sheep; or if shepherds are introduced, their talk may be perfectly, and even realistically, natural. If we want to see what the idyll originally was, we must turn to Theocritus; and in his genuine idylls we shall find both idealized and realistic poems. In him, at least, there is no "middle wall of partition" between the two kinds. A pastoral poem may be idealized by him, but quite as often it is not. In many instances his shepherds talk very naturally—sometimes rather coarsely; these poems being tolerably faithful transcripts of the actual converse of goat-herds and ox-herds, with just those changes in language, and addition of point and a poetic flavour in places, which are necessary to redeem the whole from vulgarity, and to keep weariness away from the mind of the reader. Very parallel with these, and strictly in the same class, are the charming *Poems in the Dorset Dialect*, for which the present generation is so much indebted to Mr. Barnes. But Theocritus often writes in the same manner on quite other subjects, and presents us with a scene from other kinds of life. In the second idyll, for example, a girl tries to recover the affections of a lover by magical charms; and the undersong or recurring line throughout the first part of the poem is addressed to the wryneck, which is bound to the magic wheel, and whose cries are supposed to attract the lover to the house. In another poem two friends meet, and the one narrates how, on the preceding night, he opened a particularly good jar of wine, and there was "a sweet drinking;" and how a quarrel came about between him and his mistress. At another time a "spring journey" to a festival is described, with the songs sung on the way; and the party is left enjoying mid-day repose in a reed-bed by the roadside, shaded overhead by poplars and elms, a sacred spring trickling hard by from a nymph-haunted cave; the merry din of the grasshoppers was heard from the

branches; the croaking of the tree-frog from the thicket; larks and siskins sang, and the stock-dove mourned; the yellow bees flew over the water, and all smelt of the rich heat—smelt of the coming summer. Or, again, Theocritus tells how one Syracusan lady comes to visit another; how they chat together, and go forth into the perils of the street, where the Horseguards frighten them much, and where the people "push like pigs" to the festival of Adonis. There is nothing pastoral, or fanciful, or mythological about these poems. They are simply characteristic sketches; sometimes almost photographic in their fidelity to actual life. Those, therefore, who object altogether to allegory and symbolism, need not turn away at once from a poem which is called an idyll, because it may happen to suit them very well.

It is right, perhaps, to dwell upon this side of idyllic poetry, because there are those who will appreciate it, while they will wholly refuse to place, as I do, the ideal and pastoral poems at the head of the idyllic class. Some reasons for this preference will be given presently. Meantime we must subdivide those poems, which depart more or less completely from actual life, and introduce mythological persons and idealized shepherds, into two divisions. First and highest come those which are in no sense allegories; which convey no veiled or secondary meaning; which deal with fancy because it is more poetical than fact, with imaginary characters, because they have a charm of their own not found in the actual world. In such poems a favourite subject is Polyphemus, and his hopeless love for the sea-nymph, who jests at and avoids him. Most readers of poetry know how, in Theocritus, the grotesquely-uncouth monster is made to sit, looking seaward, on a rock, and soothe his love for Galatea by song and the pipe; while she, as he describes her, "whiter than curd, softer than the lamb, more skittish than a

calf, whose skin is smoother and firmer than the unripe grape," mocks him from amid the waves, until he wishes that he had been born with fins; and takes comfort at last in the philosophic reflection that "he can find a handsomer Galatea if this one scorns him." All lovers of music know how admirably Handel, in his *Acis and Galatea*, has caught and expressed the idyllic sentiment in some of its aspects.

But the most highly-idealized poem of Theocritus is the first,<sup>1</sup> which has also influenced later poetry far more than any of the others. From this idyll Virgil and Milton have sought inspiration, and indeed have translated portions of it almost exactly. Thyrsis and a shepherd meet and challenge each other to play or sing: but to pipe at noonday is not safe; they fear Pan, who then rests, wearied with his hunting; and his anger is easily roused. So they agree that Thyrsis should sing the ode which describes the fate of Daphnis, which twice over at least has been honoured by imitation. This poem is wholly ideal; this is to say, its personages are the creation of poetic fancy: it contains no allusion, direct or indirect, to living men and their affairs. The Daphnis, over whom the lament is pronounced, never really either lived or died. More than this, the persons introduced in this kind of poetry do not speak altogether the language of real men and women; and some of the characters and incidents are purely fanciful. The idyll of this highest kind deals with a wholly ideal world, the very essence and charm of which is that it is other than the world of our practical acquaintance.

There is usually no great or lasting difference between this and the next subdivision, consisting of poems with mythological or fanciful machinery, but which are governed by a covert allusion to the actual world and contemporary personages. Virgil has, as many think, spoilt his eclogues by making them allusive instead of

purely ideal. But who cares now whether or not Tityrus had an actual prototype, or if Gallus and Lycoris really lived in the poet's circle of acquaintance?

We read the poems as poems, not as illustrations of the history of the time; and so the characters have become for us purely ideal, whatever was meant by the poet, or understood by his contemporaries. It may be added, as a testimony to the value of those poems, which it seems just now to be the fashion to decry, that they contain a greater number of often-quoted lines than almost any others of equal length; a test of merit, not indeed conclusive, yet worthy of consideration. Marot and Spenser also, as has been already remarked, introduced thinly-veiled allusions into their idylls, and used them to some extent for argumentative or controversial purposes. We may admit at once that this practice is thoroughly contrary to the spirit of idyllic poetry, and poetically wrong. But who cares now that Algrind was Archbishop Grindal? The controversial meaning is gone; the poetry remains. So old builders satirised the regular clergy in the sculpture of their cathedrals. The satire was out of place, and artistically bad; but it hardly now affects our enjoyment of the whole structure. Time has worn away, or veiled for us the false, and left the true. In any new poem of the idyllic kind the intrusion of controversial matter, or of current allusions, should be sternly condemned. But in old poems we need take no account of them, for they will not interfere with our pleasure unless we force them to do so. Virgil and Spenser have a strong tendency to be idyllic, even when they undertake to be epic; and those portions of their works which are cast in the idyllic mould have high and peculiar merits, which need not be spoilt for us by temporary defects.

The third and last division of idyllic poetry is that which its poets have consecrated to the memory of departed

<sup>1</sup> See *Macmillan's Magazine*, Aug., 1866.

friends, in which shine the names of Moschus, Milton, Shelley, and Arnold. The idyll has been considered peculiarly fit for the expression of grief. Those who have so used it, have thought that private joy or sorrow may well be the motive power which brings poetry into existence, but that it should be shown to the public only under a veil of art and in an idealized form. That which a true poet pleases to give us we must accept as it is, and enjoy the beauties it displays. If a man of genius chooses to proclaim his inmost feelings without disguise, we must be grateful for so much of the display as we can honestly admire. But he acts more wisely who limits his lament within a brief compass, and even then expresses it under forms and symbols. The absence of passion and intensity, which distinguishes idyllic poetry, makes it an excellent means for hinting at a sorrow which the public would not thank us for displaying more openly. True poetry belongs to the order of eternal things; sorrow for an individual is temporal, and does not interest others than his immediate circle of friends, unless it be expressed in a form which appeals to all men for all time. This form of idyllic poetry has, like the others, met with dispraise. Dr. Johnson, somewhat peevishly, says of *Lycidas*: "It is not to be considered as the effusion of real passion, for passion runs not after remote allusions and obscure opinions. Passion plucks no berries from the myrtle and ivy, nor calls upon Arethuse and Mincius, nor tells of rough satyrs with cloven heel. In this poem there 's no nature, for there is no truth; there is no art, for there is nothing new. Its form is that of a pastoral; easy, vulgar, and therefore disgusting. Whatever images it can supply are long ago exhausted; and its inherent improbability always forces dissatisfaction on the mind." In this sentence Johnson would no doubt have included the other poems of this class. But the true answer to the only part of this criticism which is worth an-

swering, is that passion which would be loud had best be silent. As Martial says—

"Non luget quisquis laudari, Gellia, quaerit;  
Ille dolet vere, qui sine teste dolet."

But when passion has lost its first intensity, it may very properly become the motive for poetry, which, however, with becoming modesty, will shrink from publicity, unless cloaked in those "remote allusions," "obscure opinions," and "inherent improbabilities," which the prejudices of Johnson caused him to find "vulgar"—not indeed in our modern sense—but familiar and offensive.

Having thus glanced rapidly over the divisions of idyllic poetry as it has existed in the past, we have to consider what is likely to be its position in time to come. There are two schools of prophets who prophesy of the poetry of the future. According to one school, old models will be totally abandoned; poetry will be fused by other fires, and run into wholly different moulds; and each poet will be "Ein Narr auf eigne Hand." The other holds that while, as times change, different subject-matter will be introduced into poetry, yet the old forms will be retained, and even for the highest work the old legends still give the truest inspiration. Probably, at any rate for a long time to come, the old methods will hold their ground. I can well imagine that the drama will undergo great changes, and that the drama of the future may differ as widely from that of Shakspeare as his did from that of Sophocles or Æschylus. But the drama is the most mobile form of poetry—the most subject to the influences of the age. Of course, it does not follow that because we cannot imagine a thing, it therefore will not come to pass; but those who cannot imagine cannot expect the time when the epic of the future will be essentially different from the epic of the past; and the same may be said, perhaps even more emphatically, of lyric poetry or song. So with idyllic poetry. It has changed from age to



age; it will change with the coming ages. But under its external changes it will remain essentially the same. For that which is its essence is eternally pleasing, and will be continually reproduced in one form or another. The typical idyll is a poem in which a little picture is painted in somewhat subdued colouring; it represents a scene and a slight story, which are pleasing without being exciting. The poets widely modify the idyll, each according to his own nature. But they cannot pass certain bounds; or, if they do, their poems are no longer idyllic, but something else. On the one hand, the idyll borders on the drama. Multiply the characters of the *Syracusan Women* of Theocritus—well known to English readers in Mr. Matthew Arnold's excellent version—intensify the action, and you have a play. Others again, such as the *Alexis und Dora* of Goethe, with more fire, and a shorter, livelier metre, would pass into the lyric, or perhaps the ballad region. The idyllic domain lies between these empires. It is a land "where it is always afternoon"—where strong passion and violent action may never enter. Pastoral poetry is, I know, wholly condemned by some. It has been shown that the idyll has a wider range; but there are some—*si quis captus amore leget*—who will not despise verse tasting

"Of summer and the country green,  
Dance and Provençal song and sun-burnt  
mirth."

Perfect pastoral poetry introduces us to scenes which our feet can never tread; and its shepherds have often little resemblance to the actual tenders of small cattle. Are we so abandoned to realism that we can no longer appreciate any fairy tales save those of science? If we have lost the power of loving poetry which murmurs like a slow-flowing river between great reed-beds, and which raises the charm of country life to a height only to be reached by fancy, our hold of poetry, at least on one side, has altogether slackened.

But we have left the past and are

to see how the idyll is being adapted to meet the needs of the present and the future. One instance which will occur to most persons in these days when German is so commonly read is Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea*. This poem is a good instance of the extent to which the idyll may be varied from the normal type without losing the idyllic character. The story is more fully worked out than is usual in the idyll, and is even divided into sections, whereas the true idyll seldom shifts the scene or allows you more than one look through the camera. But the idyllic sentiment, which consists in picturesque effect and lightly stirred emotion is maintained throughout, and the poem may be taken as a very fair example of the way in which the idyll may be modified to suit modern needs. Mr. Browning's art is, I think, always too intense to be purely idyllic. But his *Saul and David* is an idyll altered in character by heat, like metamorphic rocks, and several of the poems entitled *Men and Women* are very like idylls. *Love among the Ruins* is a true and very beautiful idyll.

Our other great living poet is essentially idyllic. Mr. Tennyson has indeed departed from the idyllic type when there was most reason for keeping to it, and has called a series of poems idylls which I certainly should not class under that head. His *Idylls of the King* seem more like studies for an epic poem than anything else. The first which appeared, the *Morte d'Arthur*, and which is much the finest, unless an exception be made in favour of *Guinevere*, is simply an epic fragment. It was not these, but the detached poems to be found in his works, that Mr. Kingsley thought must "make the shade of Theocritus hide his diminished head." This is high praise—I think exaggerated praise. Yet in such poems as *Dora* and the *Gardener's Daughter* Mr. Tennyson has attained to a high measure of success, and both have the true characters of the idyll, while *Enone* must always hold its place in the very front rank of this class of poetry.



But for the best work in this kind which has been done since Milton—as the lyrical nature of Shelley's poetry strongly marks even the *Adonais*—we have to thank Mr. Matthew Arnold. In the *Scholar Gipsy* he has given us a legend of Oxford. With subtle and most skilful daring he has brought the ideal and the actual, legend and modern life, close together, without ever allowing the one to jar upon the other. When he wrote of the scholar who had left Oxford life for the haunts of the gipsies, Arnold had a friend with him, who shared in the fancy that they might some day meet this wanderer,

“Rapt, twirling in his hand a withered spray,  
And waiting for the spark from Heaven  
to fall.”

But the friend could not stay.

“He could not keep,—  
For that a shadow lowered on the fields,—  
Here with the shepherds and the silly sheep,  
Some life of men unblest  
He knew, which made him droop, and filled  
his head.  
He went; his piping took a troubled sound  
Of storms that rage outside our happy  
ground;  
He could not wait their passing, he is dead!”

This friend was another poet, to whom I have referred above—Arthur Hugh Clough, and to his memory Arnold wrote a monody, which stands beside the very best memorial idylls. Space forbids quotation at greater length from this poem, *Thyrsis*, and the other, the *Scholar Gipsy*, with which it is so closely connected. But they form the best defence of idyllic poetry, because the best recent examples of effective use of the idyll.

With these examples before us I think we must admit that the idyll is likely to play a not unimportant part in the poetry of the future. It seldom has been, and seldom will be, as popular as other forms of poetry. With a few exceptions—and the merits even of these have been disputed—idyllic poetry does not command the attention and admiration of all. Yet it fills a niche which cannot be left empty without spoiling the general effect of the

temple which each age rears to poetry. The particular form which idyllic, like other poetry, takes in each epoch varies with the taste and judgment of the men of that generation. The pastoral and ideal elements may at one time be exaggerated, and at another left out altogether. Perhaps in the idyll of the future the faults of the past will be avoided, and the merits of different schools united; the pastoral symbolism will be occasionally retained and used, as Mr. Arnold has shown us it may be used, to help the translation of the harsh facts of actual life and personal sorrow into the calm and eternal regions of art; myth, legend, and reality will be taught to touch without jarring upon each other, and the idyll will be recognised as not indeed among the highest, yet one of the most pleasing forms of poetry.

The idyll does not claim a place in the highest rank. The greatest poetry is truly, although perhaps always unconsciously, didactic, or else it keenly excites the emotions and creates lofty sentiments. None of these objects can be gained by the writer of idyllic poetry. There will, therefore, never be wanting the Johnsons and the Morrells, who, from a real or a fancied eminence, exclaim—

“What, ho, thou jolly shepherd swaine,  
Come up the hill to me;  
Better is than the lowly plaine,  
Both for thy sheep and thee.”

But Thomalin knows full well that

“In humble dales is footing fast.”

It is not by all men, nor even by the greatest in all humours, that the highest kind of work can be done; nor by all men and in all humours that the highest kind of work can be enjoyed. In these days of unrest and feverish action there is special need of restful and unworldly poetry, and of such is the idyll.

“Alsoone may shepherd climb the skie  
That leades in lowly dales,  
As goteheard prowd, that, sitting hie,  
Upon the mountayne sayles.”

M. W. MOGGRIDGE.

IS FETISHISM A PRIMITIVE FORM OF RELIGION?<sup>1</sup>

## PART I.

IN my first lecture I tried to lay free the foundations on which alone a religion can be built up. If man had no power to apprehend the Infinite, even in its most primitive and undeveloped form, then he would have no right to speak of a world beyond this finite world, of time beyond this finite time, or of a Being which, even though he shrinks from calling it Zeus, or Jupiter, or Dyaus-pitar, or Lord, Lord, he may still feel after, and revere, and even love, under the names of the Unknown, the Incomprehensible, the Infinite. If, on the contrary, an apprehension of the Infinite is possible and legitimate—if I have succeeded in showing that a perception of the Infinite underlies and pervades all our perceptions of finite things, together with all the reasonings that flow from them, then we have firm ground to stand on, whether we examine the various forms which that sentiment has assumed among the nations of antiquity, or whether we sound the foundations of our own faith.

The arguments which I placed before you in my first lecture were however of a purely abstract nature. It was the possibility, not the reality of the perception of the Infinite which alone I wished to establish. Nothing could be further from my thoughts than to represent the perfect idea of the Infinite as the first step in the historical evolution of religious ideas. Religion begins as little with the idea of the Infinite as astronomy begins with the law of gravity: nay, in its purest form, that idea is the last rather than the first step in the march of the human intellect.

My first lecture, therefore, was meant to be no more than a preliminary answer to a preliminary assertion. In reply to that numerous and powerful class of philosophers who wish to stop us on the very threshold of our inquiries, who tell us that here on earth there is no admission to the Infinite, and that if Kant has done anything he has for ever closed our approaches to it, we had to make good our right by producing credentials of the Infinite which even the most positive of Positivists have to recognise, viz.—the evidence of our senses.

We have now to enter upon a new path; we have to show how men in different parts of the world worked their way in different directions, step by step, from the simplest perceptions of the world around them, to the highest concepts of religion and philosophy; how, in fact, the consciousness of the Infinite, which lay hidden in every fold of man's earliest impressions, was unfolded in a thousand different ways, till it became freer and freer of its coarser ingredients, reaching at last that point of purity which we imagine is the highest that can be reached by human thought. The history of that development is neither more nor less than the history of religion, closely connected, as that history always has been and must be, with the history of philosophy. To that history we now turn, as containing the only trustworthy illustration of the evolution of the idea of the Infinite from the lowest beginnings to a height which few can reach, but to which we may all look up from the nether part of the mount.

If you consulted any of the books that have been written during the last hundred years on the history of religion, you would find in most of them a striking agreement on at least one

<sup>1</sup> The Second of a Course of Lectures, delivered at the request of the Hibbert Trustees, in the Chapter House, Westminster Abbey.

point, viz. that the lowest form of what can be called religion is *fetishism*, that it is impossible to imagine anything lower that would still deserve that name, and that therefore fetishism may safely be considered as the very beginning of all religion. Wherever I find so flagrant an instance of agreement, the same ideas expressed in almost the same words, I confess I feel suspicious, and I always think it right to go back to the first sources, in order to see under what circumstances, and for what special purpose, a theory which commands such ready and general assent has first been started.

The word *fétichisme* was never used before the year 1760. In that year appeared an anonymous book called *Du Culte des Dieux Fétiches; ou, Parallèle de l'ancienne Religion de l'Égypte avec la Religion actuelle de Nigritie*. It is known that this little book was written by De Brosses, the well-known President de Brosses, the correspondent of Voltaire, one of the most remarkable men of the Voltairian period (born in 1709, died 1777). It was at the instigation of his friend, the great Buffon, that De Brosses seems to have devoted himself to the study of savage tribes, or to the study of man in what we should now call prehistoric times. He did so by collecting the best descriptions which he could find in the books of early travellers, sailors, traders, and explorers of distant countries, and he published in 1756 his *Histoire des Navigations aux Terres Australes*, two large volumes in quarto. Though this book is now antiquated, it contains two names which, I believe, occur here for the first time, which were, it seems, coined by De Brosses, and which will probably survive when all his other achievements, even his theory of fetishism, have been forgotten, viz. the names *Australia* and *Polynesia*.

Another book by the same author, more often quoted than read, is his *Traité de la Formation mécanique des Langues*, published in 1765. This is a work which, though its theories are

likewise antiquated, well deserves a careful perusal even in these heydays of comparative philology, and which, particularly in its treatment of phonetics, was certainly far in advance of its time.

Between his book on Eastern Voyages and his treatise on the Mechanical Formation of Language, lies his work on the Worship of the Fetish Deities, which may rightly be described as an essay on the mechanical formation of religion. De Brosses was dissatisfied with the current opinions on the origin of mythology and religion, and he thought that his study of the customs of the lowest savages, particularly those on the west coast of Africa, as described by Portuguese sailors, offered him the means of a more natural explanation.

"This confused mass of ancient mythology," he says, "has been to us an undecipherable chaos only, or a purely arbitrary riddle, so long as one employed for its solution the *figurism* of the last Platonic philosophers, who ascribed to ignorant and savage nations a knowledge of the most hidden causes of nature, and perceived in a heap of trivial practices of gross and stupid people intellectual ideas of the most abstract metaphysics. Nor have they fared better who tried, mostly by means of forced and ill-grounded comparisons, to find in the ancient mythology the detailed, though disfigured, history of the Hebrew nation, a nation that was unknown almost to all others, and made a point never to communicate its doctrines to strangers. . . . Allegory is an instrument which will do anything. The system of a figurative meaning once admitted, one soon sees everything in everything, as in the clouds. The matter is never embarrassing, all that is wanted is spirit and imagination. The field is large and fertile, whatever explications may be required."

"Some scholars," he continues, "more judicious, better instructed also in the history of the early nations whose colonies first discovered the East,

and familiar with Oriental languages, have at last, after clearing mythology of the rubbish with which the Greeks had covered it, found the true key of it in the actual history of the early nations, their opinions and their rulers, in the false translations of a number of simple expressions, the meaning of which had been forgotten by those who nevertheless continued to use them; and in the Homonymies which out of one object, designated by various epithets, have made so many different beings or persons."

"But these keys which open so well the meaning of historical fables, do not always suffice to give a reason for the singularity of the dogmatic opinions, nor of the practical rites of the early nations. These two portions of heathen theology depend either on the worship of the celestial bodies, well known by the name of *Sabeism*, or on the probably not less ancient worship of certain terrestrial and material objects, called *fétiche*, by the African negroes (he meant to say by those who visited the African negroes), and which for this reason I shall call *Fétichisme*. I ask permission to use this term habitually, and though in the proper signification it refers in particular to the religion of the negroes of Africa only, I give notice beforehand that I mean to use it with reference also to any other nation paying worship to animals, or to inanimate things which are changed into gods, even when these objects are less gods, in the proper sense of the word, than things endowed with a certain divine virtue, such as oracles, amulets, or protecting talismans. For it is certain that all these forms of thought have one and the same origin, which belongs to one general religion, formerly spread over the whole earth, which must be examined by itself, constituting, as it does, a separate class among the various religions of the heathen world."

De Brosses divides his book into three parts. In the first he collects all the information which was then accessible on fetishism, as still prac-

tised by barbarous tribes in Africa and other parts of the world. In the second he compares it with the religious practices of the principal nations of antiquity. In the third he tries to show that, as these practices are very like to one another in their outward appearance, we may conclude that their original intention among the negroes of to-day and among the Egyptians, the Greeks, and Romans, was the same.

All nations, he holds, had to begin with fetishism, to be followed afterwards by polytheism and monotheism.

One nation only forms with him an exception—the Jews, the chosen people of God. They, according to De Brosses, were never fetish-worshippers, while all other nations first received a primeval divine revelation, then forgot it, and then began again from the beginning—viz., fetishism.

It is curious to observe the influence which the prevalent theological ideas of the time exercised even on De Brosses. If he had dared to look for traces of fetishism in the Old Testament with the same keenness which made him see fetishes in Egypt, in Greece, in Rome, and everywhere else, surely the Teraphim, the Urim and Thummim, or the ephod, to say nothing of golden calves and brazen serpents, might have supplied him with ample material (Gen. xxviii. 18; Jer. ii. 27).

But though on this and some other points those who have more recently adopted and defended the theory of De Brosses would differ from him, on the whole his view of fetishism has been maintained intact during the last hundred years. It sounded so easy, so natural, so plausible, that it soon found its way into manuals and schoolbooks, and I believe we all of us have been brought up on it. I myself certainly held it for a long time, till I became more and more startled by the fact that, while in the earliest accessible documents of religious thought we look in vain for any very clear traces of fetishism, they

become more and more frequent everywhere in the later stages of religious development, and are certainly more visible in the modern corruptions of the Hindu religion<sup>1</sup> than in the earliest hymns of the *Veda*.

Why did the Portuguese navigators, who were Christians, but Christians in that metamorphic state which marks the popular Roman Catholicism of the last century—why did they recognise at once what they saw among the negroes of the Gold Coast as *feiticos*? The answer is clear. Because they themselves were perfectly familiar with a *feitico*, an amulet or a talisman; and probably all carried with them some beads, or crosses, or images, that had been blessed by their priests before they started for their voyage. They themselves were fetish-worshippers in a certain sense. What was more natural therefore for them, if they saw a native hugging some ornament, or unwilling to part with some glittering stone, or it may be prostrating himself and praying to some bones, carefully preserved in his hut, than to suppose that the negroes did not only keep these things for luck, but that they were sacred relics, something in fact like what they themselves would call *feitico*? As they discovered no other traces of any religious worship, they concluded very naturally that this outward show of regard for these *feiticos* constituted the whole of the negro's religion.

Suppose these negroes, after watching the proceedings of their white visitors, had asked on their part what the religion of those white men might be, what would they have said? They saw the Portuguese sailors handling their rosaries, burning incense to dauby images, bowing before altars, carrying gaudy flags, prostrating them-

selves before a wooden cross. They did not see them while saying their prayers, they never witnessed any sacrifices offered by them to their gods, nor was their moral conduct such as to give them the idea that they abstained from any crimes, because they feared the gods. What would have been more natural therefore for them than to say that their religion seemed to consist in a worship of *gru-grus*, their own name for what the Portuguese called *feitico*, and that they had no idea of a King of heaven, or offered any worship to Him?

With regard to the word, it is well known that the Portuguese *feitico* corresponds to Latin *factitius*. *Factitius*, from meaning what is made by hand, came to mean artificial, then unnatural, magical, enchanted and enchanting. A false key is called in Portuguese *chave feitica*, while *feitico* becomes the recognised name for amulets and similar half-sacred trinkets. The trade in such articles was perfectly recognised in Europe during the middle ages, as it is still among the negroes of Africa. A manufacturer or seller of them was called *feiticeiro*, a word which, however, was likewise used in the sense of a magician or conjurer. How common the word was in Portuguese we see from its being used in its diminutive form as a term of endearment, *meu feiticozinho* meaning my little fetish, or darling.

We see a similar transition of meaning in the Italian *fattura*, incantation, which occurs in mediæval Latin as far back as 1311;<sup>2</sup> also in *charme*, which was originally no more than *carmen*; and in the Greek *ἐμψύχον*.

It will be clear from these considerations that the Portuguese sailors—for it is to them that we are indebted for the introduction of the word *fetish*—could have applied that term to certain tangible and inanimate objects only,

<sup>1</sup> "L'étranger qui arrive dans l'Inde, et moi-même je n'ai pas fait exception à cette règle, ne découvre d'abord que des pratiques religieuses aussi dégradantes que dégradées, un vrai polythéisme, presque du fétichisme."—*De la Supériorité du Brahmanisme sur le Catholicisme*—Conférence donnée par M. Goblet d'Alviella.

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<sup>2</sup> *Synodus Pergam.*, ann. 1311, apud *Muratorium*, tom. 9, col. 561; incantationes, sacrilegia, auguria, vel maleficia, quæ *facturæ* sive *prestigia* vulgariter appellantur.



and that it was an unwarrantable liberty taken with the word which enabled De Brosses to extend it to animals, and to such things as mountains, trees, and rivers. This was the first unfortunate step on the part of De Brosses, for he thus mixed up two or really three totally distinct phases of religion, first, the worship paid to natural objects which impress the mind of man with feelings of awe or gratitude, such as rivers, trees, or mountains; secondly, the worship paid to animals, as, for instance, by the highly-cultivated inhabitants of ancient Egypt; and lastly, the superstitious veneration felt and testified for mere rubbish, apparently without any claim to such distinction.

It would have been very desirable, if the name of fetishism had been reserved for this last form of superstition, while the former two phases might very properly have been distinguished from it by the names of *Physiolatry* and *Zoolatry*.

But this is not all. De Brosses does not keep what he calls fetish-worship distinct even from idolatry, though there is a very important distinction between the two. A fetish, properly so called, is itself regarded as something supernatural; the idol, on the contrary, was originally meant as an image only, a similitude or a symbol. No doubt an idol was apt to become a fetish; but in the beginning, fetish worship, in the proper sense of the word, springs from a source totally different from that which produces idolatry.

Let us hear how De Brosses explains his idea of a fetish. "These fetishes," he says, "are anything which people like to select for adoration—a tree, a mountain, the sea, a piece of wood, the tail of a lion, a pebble, a shell, salt, a fish, a plant, a flower, certain animals, such as cows, goats, elephants, sheep, or anything like these. These are the gods of the negro, sacred objects, talismans. The negroes offer them worship, address their prayers to them, perform sacrifices, carry them about in

procession, consult them on great occasions. They swear by them, and such oaths are never broken.

"There are fetishes belonging to a whole tribe, and others belonging to individuals. National fetishes have a kind of public sanctuary; private fetishes are kept in their own place in the houses of private individuals. If the negroes<sup>1</sup> want rain, they place an empty jar before the fetish. When they go to battle, they deposit their weapons before it or him. If they are in want of fish or meat, bare bones are laid down before the fetish; while, if they wish for palm-wine, they indicate their desire by leaving with the fetish the scissors with which the incisions are made in the palm-trees. If their prayers are heard, all is right. But if they are refused, they think that they have somehow incurred the anger of their fetish, and they try to appease him."

Such is a short abstract of what De Brosses meant by fetishism, what he believed the religions of the negroes to be, and what he thought the religion of all the great nations of antiquity must have been before they reached the higher stages of Polytheism and Monotheism.

The idea that, in order to understand what the so-called civilised people may have been before they reached their higher enlightenment, we ought to study savage tribes, such as we find them still at the present day, is perfectly just. It is the lesson which geology has taught us, applied to the stratification of the human race. But the danger of mistaking metamorphic for primary igneous rocks is much less in geology than in anthropology. Allow me to quote some excellent remarks on this point by Mr. Herbert Spencer.<sup>2</sup> "To determine," he writes, "what conceptions are truly primitive, would be easy, if we had accounts of truly

<sup>1</sup> See Waitz, *Anthropologie*, vol. ii, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> *Sociology*, p. 106. See also "On some Characteristics of Malayo Polynesians," in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, February, 1878.

primitive men. But there are sundry reasons for suspecting that existing men of the lowest types, forming social groups of the simplest kinds, do not exemplify men as they originally were. Probably most of them, if not all, had ancestors in higher states; and among their beliefs remain some which were evolved during those higher states. While the degradation theory, as currently held, is untenable, the theory of progression, taken in its unqualified form, seems to me untenable also. If, on the one hand, the notion that savagery is caused by lapse from civilisation is irreconcilable with the evidence, there is, on the other hand, inadequate warrant for the notion that the lowest savagery has always been as low as it is now. It is quite possible, and, I believe highly probable, that retrogression has been as frequent as progression."

These words contain a most useful warning for those ethnologists who imagine that they have only to spend a few years among Papuas, Fuegians, or Andaman Islanders, in order to know what the primitive ancestors of the Greeks and Romans may have been. They speak of the savage of to-day as if he had only just been sent into the world, forgetting that, as a living species, he is probably not a day younger than we ourselves. He may be a more stationary being, but he may also have passed through many ups and downs before he reached his present level. Anyhow, even if it could be proved that there has been a continuous progression in everything else, no one could maintain that the same applies to religion.

That religion is liable to corruption is surely seen again and again in the history of the world. In one sense the history of all religion might be called a slow corruption of its primitive purity. At all events, no one would venture to maintain that religion always keeps pace with general civilisation. Even admitting therefore that, with regard to their tools, their dress, their manners and customs, the

Greeks and Romans, the Germans and Celts may have been before the first dawn of history in the same state in which we find some of the negro races of Africa at present, nothing would justify the conclusion that their religion also must have been the same, that they must have worshipped fetishes, stocks and stones, and nothing else.

We see Abraham, a mere nomad, fully impressed with the necessity of the unity of the godhead, while Solomon, famous among the kings of the earth, built high places for Chemosh and Moloch. Ephesus, in the sixth century before Christ, was listening to one of the wisest men that Greece ever produced, Herakleitos; while a thousand years later, the same town resounded with the frivolous and futile wranglings of Cyrillus, and the council of Ephesus. The Hindus, who, thousands of years ago, had reached in the *Upanishads* the loftiest heights of philosophy, are now in many places sunk into a grovelling worship of cows and monkeys.

But there is another and even greater difficulty. If we feel inclined to ascribe to the ancestors of the Greeks and Romans the religion of the negroes and of other savages of the present day, have we seriously asked ourselves what we really know of the religious opinions of these so-called savages?

A hundred years ago there might have been some excuse for people speaking in the most promiscuous manner of the religion of savages. Savages were then looked upon as mere curiosities, and almost anything related of them was readily believed. They were huddled and muddled together much in the same manner as I have heard Neander and Strauss quoted from the pulpit, as representatives of German neology, and hardly any attempt was made to distinguish between negro and negro, between savage and savage.

At present all such general terms are carefully avoided by scientific ethnologists. In ordinary parlance

we may still use the name of negro for black people in general, but when we speak scientifically, negro is restricted to the races on the west coast of Africa between the Senegal and the Niger, extending inland to the lake of Tchad and beyond, we hardly know how far. When the negro is spoken of as the lowest of the low, it generally is this negro of the west coast that is intended, he from whom Europeans first took their idea of a fetish-worshipper.

Totally distinct from these negroes are the Berber and Copt tribes, inhabiting the north of Africa. For historical purposes they may be said to belong to Europe rather than to Africa. These races were conquered by the Mohammedan armies, and rapidly coalesced with their conquerors. They are sometimes called Moors, but never negroes.

The races which inhabit Eastern Africa, the country of the Nile to the equator, are again distinct. They are Abyssinian or Nubian, and in language distantly allied to the Semitic family.

From the equator downward as far as the Hottentots, we find the Kaffer races, speaking their own well-defined languages, possessed of religious ideas of great sublimity, and physically also very different from what is commonly meant by a negro.

The Hottentots and Bushmen again must be treated by themselves, both on account of their language and their physical appearance.

These are only the most general divisions of the races which now inhabit Africa. If we speak of all of them simply as negroes, we do so in the same loose manner in which the Greeks spoke of Scythians, and the Romans, before Cæsar, of Celts. For scientific purposes the term negro should either be avoided altogether, or restricted to the races scattered over about twelve degrees of latitude, from the Senegal to the Niger, and extending inland to the as yet undefined regions where they are bounded

by Berber, Nubian, and Kaffer tribes.

But though the ethnologist no longer speaks of the inhabitants of Africa as negroes or niggers, it is much more difficult to convince the student of history that these races cannot be lumped together as savages, but that here, too, we must distinguish before we can compare. People who talk very freely of savages, whether in Africa, or America, or Australia, would find it extremely difficult to give any definition of that term, beyond this, that savages are different from ourselves. Savages with us are still very much what barbarians were to the Greeks. But as the Greeks had to learn that some of these so-called barbarians possessed virtues which they might have envied themselves, so we also shall have to confess that some of these savages have a religion and a philosophy of life which may well bear comparison with the religion and philosophy of what we call the civilised and civilising nations of antiquity. Anyhow, the common idea of a savage requires considerable modification and differentiation, and there is perhaps no branch of anthropology beset with so many difficulties as the study of these so-called savage races.

Let us examine a few of the prejudices commonly entertained with regard to the so-called savages. Their languages are supposed to be inferior to our own. Now here the science of language has done some good work. It has been shown, first of all, that no human beings are without language, and we know what that implies. All the stories of tribes without language, or with languages more like the twitterings of birds than the articulate sounds of human beings, belong to the chapter of ethnological fables.

What is more important still is that many of the so-called savage languages have been shown to possess a most perfect, in many cases too perfect, that is to say, too artificial a grammar, while their dictionary pos-

sesses a wealth of names which any poet might envy.<sup>1</sup> True, this wealth of grammatical forms<sup>2</sup> and this superabundance of names for special objects are, from one point of view, signs of logical weakness and of a want of powerful generalisation. Languages which have cases to express nearness to an object, movement alongside an object, approach towards an object, entrance into an object, but which have no purely objective case, no accusative, may be called rich, no doubt, but their richness is truly poverty. The same applies to their dictionary. It may contain names for every kind of animal; again for the same animal when it is young or old, male or female; it may have different words for the foot of a man, a horse, a lion, a hare; but it probably is without a name for animal in general, or even for such concepts as member or body. There is here, as elsewhere, loss and gain on both sides. But however imperfect a language may be in one point or other, every language, even that of Papuas and Veddas, is such a masterpiece of abstract thought that it would baffle the ingenuity of many philosophers to produce anything like it. In several cases the grammar of so-called savage dialects bears evidence to a far higher state of mental culture possessed by these people in former times. And it must not be forgotten that every language has capacities, if they are only called out, and that no language has yet been found into which it was not possible to translate the Lord's Prayer.

For a long time it was considered as the strongest proof of the low mental capacity of certain savages that they were unable to count beyond three or four or five. Now, first of all we want a good scholar<sup>3</sup> to vouch for

such facts when they exist; but when they have been proved to exist, then let us begin to distinguish. There may be tribes with whom everything beyond five, beyond the fingers of one hand, may be lumped together as many, though I confess I have grave doubts whether, unless they are idiots, any human beings could be found unable to distinguish between five or six or seven cows.

But let us read the accounts of the absence of numerals beyond two or three more accurately. It was said, for instance, that the Abipones<sup>4</sup> have no numbers beyond three. What do we really find? That they express *four* by *three plus one*. Now this, so far from showing any mental infirmity, proves in reality a far greater power of analysis than if four were expressed, say, by a word for hands and feet, or for eyes and ears. Savages who expressed *four* by *two-two*, would never be in danger of considering the proposition that two and two make four, as a synthetic judgment *a priori*; they would know at once that in saying "two and two make two-two," they were simply enunciating an analytical judgment.

We must not be too eager to assert the mental superiority of the races to which we ourselves belong. Some very great scholars have derived the Aryan word for *four* from the Sanskrit *ka-tur*, the Latin *quatuor*, from three, *tar*, preceded by *ka*, the Latin *que*, so that *katur*, in Sanskrit too, would have been conceived originally as *one plus three*. If some African tribes express *seven* either by *five plus two* or *six plus one*,<sup>5</sup> why should this stamp them as the lowest of the low, whereas no one blames the French,

people learn to be ready reckoners. Amongst the cognate Yorubas the saying, 'You cannot multiply nine by nine,' means, 'You are a dunce.'

<sup>4</sup> Dobrizhofer, *Historia de Abiponibus*, 1784.

<sup>5</sup> Winterbottom, *Account of the Native Africans in the Neighbourhood of Sierra Leone*. London: 1863, p. 230.

<sup>1</sup> A. B. Meyer, *On the Mafoor and other Papua Languages of New Guinea*, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> See Taplin, *The Narriayeri, South Australian Aborigines*, p. 77.

<sup>3</sup> Speaking of the Dahomans, Mr. Burton (*Memoirs of the Anthropological Society*, i. 314) says, "By perpetual cowrie-handling the

marching at the head of European civilisation, for expressing ninety by *quatre-vingt-dix*, or the Romans for saying *undeviginti* for nineteen.<sup>1</sup>

No; here too we must learn to mete to others that measure which we wish to be measured to us again. We must try to understand before we presume to judge.

Another serious charge brought against the negro in general is that he has no history. He hardly counts the days of a year, still less the years of a life. Some negro tribes consider it wrong to do so, as showing a want of trust in God. As they have no knowledge of writing, there is of course no trace of what we call history among them. I do not deny that an utter carelessness about the past and the future would be a sign of a low stage of cultivation; but this can by no means be charged against all so-called savages. Many of them remember the names and deeds of their fathers and grandfathers, and the marvel is that, without the power of writing, they should have been able to preserve their traditions, sometimes for many generations.

The following remarks from a paper by the Rev. S. J. Whitmee, throws some curious light on this subject: "The keepers of these national traditions (among the brown Polynesians) usually belonged to a few families, and it was their duty to retain intact, and transmit from generation to generation the myths and songs entrusted to their custody. The honour of the families was involved in it. It was the hereditary duty of the elder sons of these families to acquire, retain, and transmit them with verbal accuracy. And it was not only a sacred duty, but the right of holding such myths and songs was jealously guarded as a

valuable and honourable privilege. Hence the difficulty of having them secured by writing. Care was taken not to recite them too frequently or too fully at one time. Sometimes they have been purposely altered in order to lead the hearers astray. Missionaries and other foreign residents who have manifested an interest in these myths, have often been deceived in this way. Only a person thoroughly familiar with the language, quite conversant with the habits of the people, and who had their confidence, could secure a trustworthy version. And this was usually secured only after a promise made to the keepers of these treasures not to make them public in the islands.

"But notwithstanding these difficulties, some missionaries and others have succeeded in making large collections of choice myths and songs, and I am not without hope that before very long we may succeed in collecting them together for the formation of a comparative mythology of Polynesia."

"Most of these legends and songs contain archaic forms, both idioms and words, unknown to most of the present generation of the people."

"The way in which verbal accuracy in the transmission of the legends and songs has been secured is worth mentioning. In some islands all the principal stories, indeed all which are of value, exist in two forms, in *prose* and in *poetry*. The prose form gives the story in simple language. The poetic gives it in rhythm, and usually in rhyme also. The poetic form is used as a check on the more simple and more easily changed prose form. As it is easy to alter and add to the prose account, that is never regarded as being genuine, unless each particular has its poetic tally. An omission or interpolation in the poetic form would, of course, be easily detected. Thus the people have recognised the fact that a poetic form is more easily remembered than a prose form, and that it is better adapted for securing

<sup>1</sup> Many cases of forming the words eight and nine by ten, *minus* one or two, will be found in the Comparative Table of Numerals at the end of my Essay on the Turanian Languages. See also Moseley, *On the Inhabitants of the Admiralty Islands*, p. 13, and Matthews, *Hidatsa Grammar*, p. 118.



the strict accuracy of historical myths."<sup>1</sup>

Our idea of history, however, is something totally different. To keep up the memory of the kings of Egypt and Babylon, to know by heart the dates of their battles, to be able to repeat the names of their ministers, their wives and concubines, is, no doubt, something very creditable in a Civil Service examination, but that it is a sign of true culture I cannot persuade myself to believe. Sokrates was not a savage, but I doubt whether he could have repeated the names and dates of his own archons, much less the dates of the kings of Egypt and Babylon. If we consider how history is made in our own time, we shall better be able to appreciate the feelings of those who did not consider that every massacre between hostile tribes, every royal marriage-feast deserved to be recorded for the benefit of future generations. The more one sees of how history is made, the less one thinks that its value can be what it was once supposed to be. Suppose Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Gladstone, and Prince Gortshakoff were to write the history of the last two years, what would future generations have to believe? What will future generations have to believe of those men themselves, who are represented by observers, who had the best opportunity of judging them, either as high-minded patriots or as selfish partisans? Even mere facts, such as the atrocities committed in Bulgaria, cannot be described by two eye-witnesses in the same manner. Need we wonder, then, that a whole nation, I mean the old Hindus, simply despised history, in the ordinary sense of the word, and instead of burdening their memories with names and dates of kings, queens, and battles, cared more to remember the true sovereigns in the realm of thought, and the

decisive battles for the conquest of truth?

Lastly, all savages were supposed to be deficient in moral principles. I am not going to represent the savage as Rousseau imagined him, or deny that our social and political life is an advance on the hermit or nomadic existence of the tribes of Africa and America. But I maintain that each phase of life must be judged by itself. Savages have their own vices, but they also have their own virtues. If the negro could write a black book against the white man, we should miss in it few of the crimes which we think peculiar to the savage. The truth is that the morality of the negro and the white man cannot be compared, because their views of life are totally different. What we consider wrong, they do not consider wrong. We condemn, for instance, polygamy; Jews and Mohammedans tolerate it, savages look upon it as honourable, and I have no doubt that, in their state of society, they are right. Savages do not consider European colonists patterns of virtue, and they find it extremely difficult to enter into their views of life. Nothing puzzles the mere savage more than our restlessness, our anxiety to acquire and to possess, rather than to rest or to enjoy. An Indian chief is reported to have said to a European,<sup>2</sup> "Ah, brother, you will never know the blessings of doing nothing and thinking nothing; and yet next to sleep, that is the most delicious. Thus we were before our birth, thus we shall be again after death." The young girls in Tahiti, who were being taught weaving, very soon left the looms, and said, "Why should we toil? Have we not as many breadfruits and cocoa-nuts as we can eat? You who want ships and beautiful dresses must labour indeed, but we are content with what we have."<sup>3</sup>

Such sentiments are certainly very un-European, but they contain a philo-

<sup>1</sup> This throws a curious light on the Buddhist literature, where we also find the same story told twice, once in metre (Gāthā), and once in prose.

<sup>2</sup> F. Schultze, *Fetichismus*, p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

sophy of life which may be right or wrong, and which certainly cannot be disposed of by being simply called savage.

A most essential difference between many so-called savages and ourselves is the little store they set on life. Perhaps we need not wonder at it. There are few things that bind them to this life. To a woman or to a slave, in many parts of Africa or Australia, death must seem a happy escape, if only they could feel quite certain that the next life would not be a repetition of this. They are like children, to whom life and death are like travelling from one place to another; and as to the old people, who have more friends on the other side of the grave than on this, they are mostly quite ready to go, and consider it even an act of filial duty that their children should kill them, when life becomes a burden to them. Unless we take all this into account, we cannot form a right judgment of the religion of savage tribes.

At the time when De Brosse wrote the wonder was that black people should possess anything that could be called morality or religion, even a worship of stocks and stones. We have learnt to judge differently, thanks chiefly to the labours of missionaries who have spent their lives among savages, have learnt their languages and gained their confidence, and who, though they have certain prejudices of their own, have generally done full justice to the good points in their character. We may safely say that, in spite of all researches, no human beings have been found anywhere who do not possess something which to them is religion; or, to put it in the most general form, a belief in something beyond what they can see with their eyes.

As I cannot go into the whole evidence for this statement, I may be allowed to quote the conclusions which another student of the science of religion, Prof. Tiele, has arrived at on this subject, particularly as, on many points,

his views differ widely from my own. "The statement," he says, "that there are nations or tribes which possess no religion rests either on inaccurate observations, or on a confusion of ideas. No tribe or nation has yet been met with destitute of belief in any higher beings; and travellers who asserted their existence have been afterwards refuted by facts. It is legitimate, therefore, to call religion, in its most general sense, an universal phenomenon of humanity."<sup>1</sup>

When, however, these old prejudices had been removed, and when it had been perceived that the different races of Africa, America, and Australia could not be lumped together under the common name of savages, the real difficulties of studying these races began to be felt, more particularly with regard to their religious opinions. It is difficult enough to give an accurate and scholar-like account of the religion of the Jews, the Greeks, the Romans, the Hindus and Persians; but the difficulty of understanding and explaining the creeds and ceremonies of those illiterate races is infinitely greater. Any one who has worked at the history of religion knows how hard it is to gain a clear insight into the views of Greeks and Romans, of Hindus and Persians on any of the great problems of life. Yet we have here a whole literature before us, both sacred and profane, we can confront witnesses, and hear what may be said on the one side and the other. If we were asked, however, to say, whether the Greeks in general, or one race of Greeks in particular, and that race again at any particular time, believed in a future life, in a system of rewards and punishments after death, in the supremacy of the personal gods or of an impersonal fate, in the necessity of prayer and sacrifice, in the sacred character of priests and temples, in the inspiration of prophets and law-givers, we should find it often extremely hard to give a definite answer. There is a whole literature on the

<sup>1</sup> *Outlines*, p. 6.

theology of Homer, but there is anything but unanimity between the best scholars who have treated on that subject during the last two hundred years.

Still more is this the case when we have to form our opinions of the religion of the Hindus and Persians. We have their sacred books, we have their own recognised commentaries: but who does not know that the decision whether the ancient Brahmans believed in the immortality of the soul depends sometimes on the right interpretation of a single word, while the question whether the Persians admitted an original dualism, an equality between the principle of Good and Evil, has to be settled in some cases on purely grammatical grounds?

When scholars differ from each other on such points, the mischief is not so serious; they have to give the reasons for and against their own view, and others may form their own opinion.

Yet it is strange to see what extraordinary misapprehensions arise when philosophers, who are not Oriental scholars by profession, attempt to utilise the statements of Sanskrit, Zend, Chinese, or Hebrew scholars. The same writers who in a few lines, often without any references to authorities, and without any attempt at determining the trustworthiness of their authorities, tell us what the Kaffers, the Bushmen, and Hottentots believe about the soul, about death, about God, and everything else, seldom make a statement about Chinese or Jews, about Hindus or Persians, which a scholar would not at once challenge. I shall give a few instances, not in a carping spirit, but simply to point out a very real danger.

There is no word more frequently used by the Brahmans than the word *Om*. It may have meant originally Yes, but it soon assumed a solemn character, something like our *Amen*. It had to be used at the beginning, also at the end of every recitation, and there are few MSS. that do not begin

with it. It is even prescribed for certain salutations;<sup>1</sup> in fact, there was probably no word more frequently heard in ancient and modern India than *Om*. Yet we are told authoritatively that the Hindus avoid uttering the sacred name *Om*. It is quite possible that in a collective work, such as Dr. Muir's most excellent *Sanskrit Texts*, a passage may occur in support of such a statement. In the mystic philosophy of the *Upanishads*, *Om* became one of the principal names of the Brahman, and a knowledge of that Brahman was certainly forbidden to be divulged. But how different is that from stating that "by various semi-civilised races the calling of deities by their proper names has been interdicted or considered improper. It is so among the Hindus, who avoid uttering the sacred name *Om*; it was so with the Hebrews, whose pronunciation of the word Jehovah is not known for this reason; and Herodotus carefully avoids naming Osiris." The last statement will surprise those who remember how it is Herodotus who tells us that, though Egyptians do not all worship the same gods, they all worship Isis and Osiris, whom they identify with Dionysus.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Muir<sup>3</sup> is no doubt perfectly right in saying that in some passages of the *Veda* "certain gods are looked upon as confessedly mere created beings," and that they, like men, were made immortal by drinking *soma*. But this only shows how dangerous even such careful compilations as Dr. Muir's *Sanskrit Texts* are apt to become. The gods in the *Veda* are called *amartya*, immortal, in opposition to men, who are *martya*, or mortal, and it is only in order to magnify the power of *soma*, that this beverage, like the Greek *αὐβροσία*, is said to have conferred immortality on the gods. Nor did the Vedic poets think of their gods as what we mean by "mere created beings," because they spoke of the Dawn as

<sup>1</sup> *Āpastamba-Sātras*, i. 4, 13, 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Her.* ii. 42; 144; 156.

<sup>3</sup> *Sanskrit Texts*, v. p. 12.

the daughter of the Sky, or of Indra as springing from Heaven and Earth. At least we might say with much greater truth that the Greeks looked upon Zeus as a mere created thing, because he was the son of Kronos.

Again, what can be more misleading than, in order to prove that all gods were originally mortals, to quote Buddha's saying: "Gods and men, the rich and poor, alike must die." In Buddha's time, nay, even before Buddha's time, the old Devas, whom we choose to call Gods, had been used up. Buddha believed in no god or gods. He allowed the old Devas to subsist as mere fabulous beings<sup>1</sup>; and as fabulous beings of much greater consequence than the Devas shared in the common fate of all that exists, viz. an endless migration from birth to death, and from death to birth, the Devas could not be exempted from that common lot.

In forming an opinion of the mental capacities of people, an examination of their language is no doubt extremely useful. But such an examination requires considerable care and circumspection. An eminent psychologist says, "When we read of an existing South-American tribe, that the proposition 'I am an Abipone,' is expressible only in the vague way—'I Abipone,' we cannot but infer that by such undeveloped grammatical structures only the simplest thoughts can be rightly conveyed." Would not some of the most perfect languages in the world fall under the same condemnation?

If such misunderstandings happen where they might easily be avoided, what shall we think when we read broad statements as to the religious opinions of whole nations and tribes who possess no literature, whose very language is frequently but imperfectly understood, and who have been visited, it may be, by one or two travellers only for a few days, for a few weeks, or for a few years!

The word for God throughout Eastern Polynesia is *Atua* or *Akua*.

<sup>1</sup> See M. M., *Buddhistischer Nihilismus*.

Now *ata*, in the language of those Polynesian islanders, means shadow, and what would seem to be more natural than to see in this name of God, meaning originally shadow, a confirmation of a favourite theory, that the idea of God sprang from the idea of spirit, and the idea of spirit from that of shadow? It would seem mere captiousness to object to such a theory, and to advise caution where all seems so clear. Fortunately the languages of Polynesia have in some instances been studied in a more scholarlike spirit, so that our theories must submit to being checked by facts. Thus Mr. Gill,<sup>1</sup> who has lived twenty years at Mangaia, shows that *atua* cannot be derived from *ata*, shadow, but is connected with *fatu* in Tahitian and Samoan, and with *aitu*, and that it meant originally the core or pith of a tree. From meaning the core and kernel, *ata* came to mean the best part, the strength of a thing, and was used in the sense of lord and master. The final *a* in *Atua* is intensive in signification, so that *Atua* expresses to a native the idea of the very core and life. This was the beginning of that conception of the deity which they express by *Atua*.

When we have to deal with the evidence of a scholar like Mr. Gill, who has spent nearly all his life among one and the same tribe, a certain amount of confidence is excusable. Still even he cannot claim the same authority which belongs to Homer, when speaking of his own religion, or to St. Augustine, when giving us his interesting account of the beliefs of the ancient Romans. And yet, who does not know how much uncertainty is left in our minds after we have read all that such men have to say with regard to their own religion, or the religion of the community in which they passed the whole of their life!

The difficulties which beset travellers and missionaries in their description of the religious and intellectual life of

<sup>2</sup> *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, p. 33.

savage tribes are far more serious than is commonly supposed.

First of all, few men are quite proof against the fluctuations of public opinion. There was a time when many travellers were infected with Rousseau's ideas, so that in their eyes all savages became very much what the Germans were to Tacitus. Then came a reaction. Partly owing to the influence of American ethnologists, who wanted an excuse for slavery, partly owing, at a later time, to a desire of finding the missing link between men and monkeys, descriptions of savages began to abound which made us doubt whether the negro was not a lower creature than the gorilla, whether he really deserved the name of man.

When it became a question much agitated, whether religion was an inherent characteristic of man or not, some travellers were always meeting with tribes who had no idea and name for gods;<sup>1</sup> others discovered exalted notions of religion everywhere. My friend Mr. Tylor has made a very useful collection of contradictory accounts given by different observers of the religious capacities of one and the same tribe. Perhaps the most ancient instance on record is the account given of the religion of the Germans by Cæsar and Tacitus. Cæsar states that the Germans count those only as gods whom they can perceive, and by whose gifts they are clearly benefited, such as the Sun, the Fire, and the Moon.<sup>2</sup> Tacitus declares "that they call by the names of gods that hidden thing which they do not perceive, except by reverence."<sup>3</sup>

And even if we find a traveller without any scientific bias, free from any wish to please the leaders of scien-

tific schools, there remains, when he attempts to give a description of the religion of savage tribes, the immense difficulty that not one of these religions has any recognised standards, that religion among savage tribes is almost entirely a personal matter, that it may change from one generation to another, and that even in the same generation the greatest variety of individual opinion may prevail with regard to the gravest questions of religion. True, there are priests, there may be some sacred songs, and there always is some teaching from mothers to their children. But there is no Bible, no Prayer Book, no Catechism. Religion floats in the air, and each man takes as much or as little of it as he likes.

We shall thus understand why accounts given by different missionaries and travellers of the religion of one and the same tribe should sometimes differ from each other like black and white. There may be in the same tribe an angel of light and a vulgar ruffian, yet both would be considered by European travellers as authorities with regard to their religion. That there are differences in the religious convictions of the people is admitted by the negroes themselves.<sup>4</sup>

At Widah Des Marchais was distinctly told that the nobility only knew of the supreme God as omnipotent, omnipresent, rewarding the evil and the good, and that they approached him with prayers only when all other appeals had failed. There is, however, among all nations, savage as well as civilised, another nobility—the divine nobility of goodness and genius—which often places one man many centuries in advance of the common crowd.

Think only what the result would be if, in England, the criminal drunkard and the sister of mercy who comes to visit him in his miserable den were asked to give an account of their common Christianity, and you will be less surprised, I believe, at the discrepancies in the reports given by

<sup>1</sup> M. M., *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, p. 538.

<sup>2</sup> *De Bello Gall.* vi. 21. "Deorum numero eos solos ducent quos cernunt, et quorum aperto opibus juvantur, Solem, et Vulcanum, et Lunam."

<sup>3</sup> Tac. *Germ.* 9. "Deorumque nominibus appellant secretum illud quod sola reverentia vident."

<sup>4</sup> Waitz, *Anthropologie*, ii. 129, 215.



different witnesses of the creed of one and the same African tribe.

It might be said that the priests, when consulted on the religious opinions of their people, ought to be unimpeachable authorities. But is that so? Is it so with us?

We have witnessed ourselves, not many years ago, how one of the most eminent theologians declared that one whose bust now stands with those of Keble and Kingsley in the same chapel of Westminster Abbey, did not believe in the same God as himself! Need we wonder, then, if priests among the Ashantis differ as to the true meaning of their fetishes, and if travellers who have listened to different teachers of religion differ in the accounts which they give to us? In some parts of Africa, particularly where the influence of Mohammedanism is felt, fetishes and sellers of fetishes are despised. The people who believe in them are called *thiedos*, or infidels.<sup>1</sup> In other parts, fetish-worship rules supreme, and priests who manufacture fetishes and live by the sale of them shout very loudly, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

Lastly, let us consider that, in order to get at a real understanding of any religion, there must be a wish and a will on both sides. Many savages shrink from questions on religious topics, partly, it may be, from some

superstitious fear—partly, it may be, from their helplessness in putting their own unfinished thoughts and sentiments into definite language. Some races are decidedly reticent. Speaking is an effort to them. After ten minutes conversation, they complain of headache.<sup>2</sup> Others are extremely talkative, and have an answer to everything, little caring whether what they say is true or not.<sup>3</sup> I mentioned in my first Lecture the account of some excellent Benedictine<sup>4</sup> missionaries, who, after three years spent at their station in Australia, came to the conclusion that the natives did not adore any deity, whether true or false. Yet they found out afterwards that the natives believed in an omnipotent Being, who had created the world. Suppose they had left their station before having made this discovery, who would have dared to contradict their statements?

De Brosses, when he gave his first and fatal account of fetishism, saw none of these difficulties. Whatever he found in the voyages of sailors and traders was welcome to him. He had a theory to defend, and whatever seemed to support it, was sure to be true.

F. MAX MÜLLER.

<sup>2</sup> H. Spencer, *Sociology*, i. p. 94.

<sup>3</sup> Mayer, *Papua-sprachen*, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, February, 1878.

<sup>1</sup> Waitz, ii. 200. *On Different Classes of Priests*, ii. 199.

*To be continued.*

## FREEMASONRY: ITS HISTORY AND AIMS.

THE installation of the Prince of Wales as Grand Master of English Freemasons has awakened a fresh interest in this ancient society, which, embracing in its bond of brotherhood kings and tradesmen, nobles and artisans, soldiers, scholars, and divines of every civilised people, is still viewed with the most varied feelings of curiosity and suspicion, ridicule, or mystery, by those who have not been initiated into its secrets.

Though it has always flourished most in the congenial atmosphere of civil and religious liberty enjoyed under Protestant governments, yet at no time has any branch of the Christian Church been excluded from participation in its privileges, and of late it has opened its portals to Jews and other believers in the purer forms of Monotheism. Though numbering amongst its members many of the best and wisest of men, it has been persecuted by some European governments with relentless cruelty, and is still denounced by the Romish hierarchy as an impious association, the members of which are *ipso facto* excommunicate. In other countries it is often looked on as a great Benefit Society, the high pretensions and pompous accessories of which are calculated to provoke a smile of amusement, if not of contempt.

Great, however, as are the benefits of Freemasonry, it is far more than a benefit society. It may be defined, in its own words, as a "beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols." It lives and instructs in emblems and symbols, in which the leading idea is that the Freemasons are a body of real masons, engaged in the erection of a spiritual temple, affording to each that encouragement and aid, material or moral, of which he may stand in need; bound to practise collectively and individually every public

and private virtue; to contemplate all mankind as brethren, but especially those united by the same sacred tie, whatever their nation, or their place in the social scale; to practise "charity" in its broadest and deepest meaning; to do all this silently, secretly, without publicity or ostentation—this, and nothing less, is the purpose, the labour of the craft. This is incumbent on every Mason, whatever his abilities or his opportunities, but it involves also a devout and intelligent study of the sciences, as the works of the Great Architect of the universe.

The materials on which the operative mason has to work, and each implement he employs in his art, are to the modern mason, as they were to his forefathers, the builders of the glorious cathedrals of the middle ages, pregnant with symbolic meaning. Our common humanity, the equality of all men, whatever their accidents of birth and education, in the sight of God and of the law, is illustrated by the level; uprightness of conduct is seen in the plummet; the compass teaches the mason to circumscribe his desires by reason and prudence, and to confine his indulgence within the limits of strict moderation; the twenty-four-inch rule represents the twenty-four hours of the day, which are to be duly appropriated to labour and refreshment, to rest and to prayer; the gavel, the trowel, the square, and the ladder have each their lessons to the mind of the thoughtful Mason, which are inculcated and expounded in the work of the lodge. The legend of the craft, the charges and ceremonies, everything, in short, which is said or done in their assemblies, is designed to make the Mason a better citizen, a better subject, a better man—to teach him his duty to God, his neighbour, and his brother in the craft.

That many thoughtless, and not a few unworthy men have gained admission

into the society, and that the symbolism just alluded to is to many little more than a form of words, it would be folly to deny; but this does not detract from the purity of the principles, or the grandeur of the aims which it sets before its members; it amounts to no more than a confession that Masonry is not exempt from the imperfections incident to every human system.

Unfortunately, though the old Masons of England have bequeathed to us a rich legacy of Masonic lore and moral teachings in illustration of the emblems of the craft, they have, so far from throwing any light on the past history of Masonry, greatly increased the difficulties which naturally surround such an inquiry; while the vagaries of the erratic sects which arose in the degenerate period of the craft have made confusion worse confounded.

Our ritual and symbols being full of allusions to the Biblical period of Jewish history, and bearing perhaps some remote resemblance to the mysteries of the ancients, enthusiasts have imagined that our history could be traced back into the cloudy mists of antiquity. Instead of inquiring when and how these ceremonies were incorporated into our system, they have taken it for granted that they were directly derived from the earliest sources, and that Masonry flourished full-blown under the patronage of King Solomon. Each fancied resemblance or agreement with some symbol or reputed custom of the mysteries of the Eleusinians and Essenes, or with the rites of the ancient Indians and Egyptians, has been taken for a safe guide and clue to a more or less close connection between these and Freemasonry, and imagination has provided what history has failed to transmit of the doctrines, practices, and secrets of these heterogeneous sects.

It might seem needless to insist on the absurdity of such wild speculations, were it not that the authentic or legendary history of Solomon's temple is interwoven with every part of our system, and that we are thereby apparently placed in the painful dilemma

of being compelled either to claim an antiquity for which there is not the slightest warrant, or to renounce the cherished associations of our beautiful ritual and symbolical system.

There is, however, a third alternative. We said that we were, as Masons, engaged in the erection of a spiritual temple, and, if we once fairly apprehend this idea, we shall see that nothing could have been found more fit, or could more strongly testify to the wisdom and piety of our forefathers in the craft, than the choice of this sacred allegory, which stamps the whole system with a religious character, and directs our thoughts to the volume of the sacred law which lies open in front of the Master's chair. The theory which connects the Eleusinian mysteries of Greece with Freemasonry has always found adherents; we shall, however, dismiss it with the observation that such resemblances, if they exist at all, exist rather in modern than in ancient Masonry. The ancient mysteries were essentially religious and pagan, the idea of a "craft" being totally absent, indeed foreign to the whole system. In Freemasonry, on the contrary, the essential idea, which underlies and is assumed in every part, is that of a company of operative masons, working under the direction of masters and architects. On this the religious and philosophical element is an accretion; the craft has been elevated and spiritualized, but it remains a craft. If then we are to seek an origin among the institutions of antiquity, it must be among the operative, and not among the religious associations of those days.

Such quasi-masonic societies we find in the *Collegia Fabrorum*, which flourished both at home and in the provinces under the Roman Empire. These, which must not be confounded with the centuries of *fabri* of the kingly period, were voluntary associations of skilled mechanics. The permission of the government being required for their formation, and registration of their members enforced they, held a recognised legal status. We learn from Pliny (Ep. x. 35 [42]), that they enjoyed

privileges, probably of secrecy, which were capable of abuse; and that, like the Masonic guilds of the Middle Ages, they undertook in their corporate capacity the erection of public buildings. It is maintained by Krause and others, that they partook of a religious character, and possessed a symbolic ritual; by some, on the other hand, they are believed to have been rather of the nature of trades unions. They had their officers, magistri, decuriones, censors, treasurers, secretaries and keepers of the archives, three orders of members, and a corporate seal. The members were bound by oath to mutual assistance, and when in distress received relief from the funds of the collegium. Lay members, or amateurs, were often admitted as "Patrons;" but Pliny, in the letter cited above, undertakes that none but *bonâ fide fabri* shall be enrolled in the collegium at Nicomedia, the establishment of which he recommends.

On the tombs of Roman Masons are found not only the compasses, square, plummet, and trowel, but occasionally a pair of shoes, on which lie the half-opened compasses, an emblem strongly suggestive of some symbolical allusion (Dallaway's *Discourses on Architecture*, p. 401).

It is, however, to the Architectural and Masonic guilds of Germany that we must look for the true origin of our order. The Roman's duties and obligations were limited to his own collegium; he had no passwords or signs by which he could gain admission to a lodge on his travels; the idea of a universal brotherhood, nay, the very name of brother, had its rise in the unselfish spirit of Christianity, obscured though that religion was amid the lawlessness and rapacity of the times. Then men of the same trades and professions formed themselves into guilds or fraternities for mutual protection, and for the better maintenance and transmission of the knowledge and art of which they, in the absence of books, were the living and only repositories.

In the year 1000 the whole of Christendom was possessed with the idea that the end of the world and the day of

judgment were at hand; and when the dreaded year had passed, and the panic had subsided, a great impulse to the building of churches arose throughout central and western Europe. The buildings which were the result of this impulse gave employment to large numbers of artificers for periods of many years. Working at first under the direction of the bishops and abbots, they ere long acquired considerable independence. The "lay brethren," as they had previously been styled, separating themselves from their clerical superiors, as well as from the common labourers, assembled in *Bauhütten*, or wooden buildings near the site of the churches, where they improved themselves in the principles of their art, blending with mathematical and artistic studies a mystic philosophy of sacred symbolism and Biblical allusions.

They were divided into three classes, viz., Apprentices (*Lehrlingen*), young men deemed worthy of admission into the fraternity; Fellow-craftsmen (*Gesellen*), who had so far advanced as to be able to work alone on the details of the art, and were bound to impart their knowledge to the apprentices; and Masters, comparatively few in number, who were competent to undertake the design or direction of entire works, in the capacity of architects, surveyors, or master-builders. The entered apprentice was entrusted with a secret sign and password (*Gruss*), and bound on oath to divulge to none but the initiated either the knowledge he should acquire or the rites and practices of his lodge. This method of mutual recognition was a necessity when indentures and diplomas were unknown, but taken in conjunction with the mystic philosophy inculcated and the secret ritual practised within the lodges, it acquired in time a solemnity and a sacredness which could attach to no mere certificates of membership or of proficiency. Further credentials were provided in a set of questions and answers forming a sort of catechism, orally communicated, and guarded by the same sanction, by which the "brethren," as they now called

one another, could give proof of their identity wherever they might travel in search of employment, and which are in all essential points preserved in the "Lectures" of the three degrees of modern Freemasonry.

*Bauhütten* were permanently established in most of the chief cities of the empire, and the reputation which their masters acquired for genius and skill led to the engagement of German architects in other countries, wherever cathedrals or churches were being erected on a scale of more than ordinary grandeur.

At first the several lodges worked independently of one another; but in the fifteenth century the necessity of further union began to be felt, and on April 25th, 1459, a gathering of the Master Masons of Central and Southern Germany was held at Ratisbon, when the regulations of the different lodges were revised and consolidated. In 1492 a second and more general assembly was held, at which the whole of the Masons of Germany were represented, and united into a single brotherhood, of which the chief of the lodge of Strassburg, which had long been recognised as a last court of appeal, even by the lodges of Austria and Switzerland, was declared perpetual Grand Master. The statutes then drawn up received in 1498 the confirmation of the Emperor Maximilian I., whose example was followed by several of his successors.

After the Reformation a period of transition began; the building of churches declined, and in the following century the German princes naturally looked with suspicion on a vast and well-organised association of men bound together by the closest ties, and owing allegiance to an authority which by the loss of Alsace had passed under French dominion.

In 1707 all communication with the mother lodge of Strassburg was prohibited, and attempts were made to establish a grand lodge on German soil; but these failing, through the mutual jealousies of the petty states of the empire, the most persistent efforts were

made for the entire suppression of the order. But, although proscribed, it could not be exterminated; the lodges still met in secret, admitted new members, and maintained their existence and continuity, until the new Freemasonry, which had meanwhile arisen in England on the ruins of the old, held out to its German brethren the right-hand of fellowship, and in once more raising them to liberty and honour, did but repay the debt which our country owed to its continental sister.

German Masons, as we have said, carried their art and knowledge into England at an early period, but their lot in this country was not a happy one. The ecclesiastics, whom modern Freemasons with pardonable vanity claim as patrons or as masters of the craft, appropriated to themselves all the credit of the buildings erected under their auspices, and treated the members of the craft with harshness and suspicion.

The fraternity was viewed in the light of a trades union, and several statutes were enacted in which Masons were coupled with labourers, &c. Statute of 1360-1, after prescribing that wages shall be paid daily and in no other way, adds that "all alliances and covenants of masons and carpenters, and congregations, chapters, ordinances, and oaths betwixt them made, or hereafter to be made, shall be from henceforth void and wholly annulled." This was re-enforced by 3 Hen. VI. (1425), and by 15 Hen. VI. (1436-7) — "The masters, wardens, and people of the guilds, fraternities, and other companies incorporate, dwelling in divers parts of this realm," are warned not to "make among themselves unlawful and unreasonable ordinances for their singular profit and the common damage of the people."

The statute of 3 Hen. VI. seems, however, not to have been always enforced, for in 1429 a lodge was held at Canterbury under the patronage of the Archbishop himself, as we learn from a MS. of William Morlat, the Prior,<sup>1</sup> in

<sup>1</sup> *Liberatio generalis Dom. Gul. Morlat Prioris ecclesie Christi Cantuar. erga festum natalis Dom. 1429.*



which occur the names of the master, wardens, and other members of the lodge; and the fabric rolls of York Minster<sup>1</sup> show an unbroken line of Master Masons from 1347.

The constitutions, rites, and secrets of the English Masons were borrowed from their German instructors, with such variations as might be expected from their different circumstances. Struggling under opposition, they demanded of their candidates a greater strength of character, and an even stricter morality; the period of apprenticeship was increased from five to seven years, but the necessity for foreign travel was dispensed with. In their societies great attention was paid to moral and mental cultivation, and the lodges met secretly at sunrise.

At this early period few written documents existed in connection with the society. The most important of the older authentic documents of English Masonry is a parchment MS. in 12mo., discovered by Mr. Halliwell, in the British Museum, the date of which has been fixed by Dr. Kloss on internal evidence as not earlier than 1427, nor later than 1444-5. It contains the legend of the craft, the old constitutions, a number of later laws and resolutions, with other matter of the nature of moral instruction.

The Constitutions of the York Masons, certainly authentic, are still more ancient, bearing the dates of 1370 and 1409 respectively. The Cooke-Baker MS. must have been written between 1482 and 1500. All others are either of later date, or doubtful copies of documents no longer extant.

The so-called Constitutions of Athelstane, said to have been written in 926, and a dialogue attributed to the pen of Henry VI., have been justly condemned by Dr. Kloss as forgeries.

The name of Freemason has been supposed to denote a worker in free-stone; but, plausible as this derivation may appear to some, it will not explain

the early assumption of the name by the Masons of Germany (*Freimaurer*), in whose language such stone is known as Quader-stein. It was, doubtless, both here and abroad intended to indicate their independence of the clergy under whose control and direction they had formerly acted: to mark them as companies of skilled artificers working under their own masters, and lending their services at their own terms to their clerical employers.

Palpable and amusing evidence of this early acquired independence is afforded by many ludicrous and irreverent devices introduced into the carving of sundry German churches. At Strassburg, for instance, in one of the transepts opposite the pulpit, an ass is reading mass at the altar, while a bear carrying a cross, a wolf with a taper, a hog, a goat, and a bitch are forming a procession; in the cathedral at Brandenburg a fox in priestly vestments is preaching to a congregation of geese; at Dobberan, in Mecklenburg, in a beautifully-carved altar-piece, two priests are grinding dogmas out of a mill; at Berne, in a representation of the "Last Judgment," the Pope is among the damned; while, in the church of St. Sebaldus at Nuremberg, and elsewhere, are to be seen gross and profane satires on the corruption and immorality of the religious orders of both sexes.

In England the name of Freemason first occurs, according to Wyatt Papworth, in a statute of 25 Ed. III. (1350). In the constitution of the Court of Common Council of the City of London in 1376, we find among the several trade-guilds the Masons sending four members, and the Freemasons two, thus proving their mutual independence at that early period; in a statute of 19 Ric. II. (1396), we have the "*lathomos vocatos firemaceons*" distinguished from the "*lathomos vocatos ligiers*," i.e. stone layers; and in the fabric rolls of Exeter Cathedral the word "*simentarius*" (*cementarius*) occurs before, and "*fremason*" after that date, all these instances being prior to

<sup>1</sup> Browne's *History of York Cathedral*, published 1838-47, and by Surtees Society, 1859.

the adoption of the name by the mother lodge of Strassburg, the members of which were, until 1440, styled the brethren of St. John.

During the stormy period of the civil wars, and of the Reformation, we meet with nothing to arrest our attention; but in the reign of Elizabeth, the English nobility began to travel on the Continent, and introduced into this country a taste for Italian art, men of rank and wealth vying with one another in their encouragement of architecture and Freemasonry. Foremost among these was Sir Thomas Sackville, who devoted his whole life to the promotion of the fine arts, and was, until his death in 1567, a munificent patron of the fraternity.

Early in the reign of King James, William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, returned from his antiquarian researches in Italy, where he had been accompanied by a young artist, Inigo Jones. Palladio was dead, but his style was dominant in Italy. Jones devoted himself to the study of this school, and on his return to England, having been through the interest of Pembroke appointed surveyor-general of the royal buildings, he introduced into this country the so-called Augustan style. Italian architects came over, and were distributed among the various lodges, which were now constituted somewhat on the model of the Italian seminaries of art.

From 1607 to 1618, Inigo Jones was Patron of the Freemasons, the fraternity flourished under his direction; noble, learned and wealthy men were admitted as a sort of associates or honorary members, or as they were called by way of distinction, "Accepted Masons." Quarterly meetings and festivals were held, and lodges of instruction founded.

During the wars of the Parliament and the Commonwealth, Freemasonry, as might have been expected from its close connection with art and with the Church, suffered greatly; but it experienced something of a revival in 1663, when Henry Jermyn, Earl of St. Albans, was elected Grand Master; Sir John

Denham, D.G.M., and Sir Christopher Wren, and Joseph Webb, Grand Wardens. In the reign of Queen Anne, however, it gradually declined, until, to prevent its total extinction, it was resolved "that the privileges of Masonry should no longer be restricted to operative Masons, but extended to men of every profession, provided they were regularly approved and initiated into the order."

"Here, then," to quote the words of Dr. Findel, the great historian of the craft, "we are at the end of ancient Masonry. The operative masons, who for a long time past had been decreasing in number, now acknowledged by this resolution, that it was out of their power, as operative masons, to continue the existence of their fraternity any longer. They had fulfilled their mission by carefully preserving their ancient laws, traditions, and ceremonies, and transmitting them as a heritage to the Grand Lodge of England."

"The long contemplated separation of the Freemasons from the operative guilds was now speedily carried into effect, and the institution made rapid strides towards a complete and perfect transformation. From the materials slowly, surely, and regularly prepared far back in the dim twilight of the Middle Ages, carefully cherished and handed down to posterity by the old building associations of Germany and England, arose a new and beautiful erection. Modern Freemasonry was now to be taught as a spiritualizing art, and the fraternity of operative masons was now exalted to a brotherhood of symbolical builders, who, in place of perishable temples, are engaged in the erection of one eternal invisible temple of human hearts and minds."

The leaders in this new movement were the Rev. Dr. Theophilus Desaguliers, son of a French Protestant refugee, celebrated as a mathematician and natural philosopher, George Payne, a learned antiquary, and the Rev. Dr. Anderson, an English clergyman.

After some preliminary negotiation, the four ancient lodges in London met together, constituting themselves a grand lodge *pro tem.*, and on St. John's-day, 1717, elected Anthony Sayer, Grand Master. Among other resolutions carried at this meeting was one that, "with the exception of these four lodges, which had met from time immemorial, every lodge to be afterwards convened, should meet only in virtue of

a warrant granted by the Grand Master on petition, legally authorizing the members to act as a lodge."

Formerly a sufficient number of Masons, wherever and whenever they might meet, had power to open a lodge, and to initiate new members, a practice, which, however adapted to times of oppression, would in these days be evidently open to great abuse.

Bros. Payne and Desaguliers successively occupied the chair till 1721, when the Duke of Montagu was elected Grand Master. In his time Dr. Anderson was commissioned to revise and digest the old constitutions and charges, and his work having been approved by all the lodges, was published by authority in 1723.

From this time Freemasonry has continued to flourish in England, and has spread thence to every quarter of the globe, but its domestic history affords little calling for notice in this place, except the division of the country in 1727 into provinces under provincial grand lodges; the recognition in 1772 of the Royal Arch degree, which had been introduced into this country from France about 1743 (and which, forming no part of the ancient system, is happily the only form of degenerate Masonry which has received the sanction of the Grand Lodge of England); the special exemption of Freemasonry from the provisions of the Act of 1799, directed against secret and seditious societies; and the amalgamation effected in 1813 between the Grand Lodge of London, and the Lodge of York, which had for some time asserted an independent jurisdiction in the north.

In Scotland the new Freemasonry is, as in England, of native growth, but the early history of the craft is lost in obscurity. James II. in 1441 (or as some think James I. in 1430), appointed William Sinclair of Roslin, Earl of Caithness and Orkney, Patron of the Masons of Scotland, an office which was confirmed to his heirs by royal patent, and held by them till 1736, when William St. Clair, having

no son, placed his resignation in the hands of the assembled lodges, and was thereupon unanimously chosen Grand Master, an office which has since that day been elective.

That Freemasonry never possessed much influence or power in Scotland until its reconstitution on the modern basis in 1736, is evident from the facts that the supreme authority was for three hundred years vested in one family by royal patent, that the Wardens until the 17th century had also been nominated by the king, that it is not until that time that we find any mention of "accepted," i.e. non-operative Masons, that even the Masters of many lodges were unable to read or write, and that the office of Grand Master was not instituted before 1736, St. Clair in his deed of resignation, styling himself "Patron, Protector, and Judge," while one of the assembled lodges, which conferred on him the title of Grand Master, was still composed of journeymen masons.

The Scottish Grand Lodge recognises only the three ancient degrees, and holds its annual festival on St. Andrew's instead of St. John's day.

Ireland received its Masonry from England in 1730, but has fallen into the error of acknowledging no less than fifteen degrees.

The order was transplanted from England into France in the same year, but the French people soon showed how incapable they were of appreciating the gift. Masons were initiated indiscriminately, warrants were sold to tavern-keepers, creating them Masters of their lodges for life, others were forged or ante-dated, as were documents of every description; lodges of adoption were formed for women, and one experiment was made of a mixed lodge, with a result too serious even for French sense of propriety.

In 1740 the Chevalier Ramsay, a supporter of the Young Pretender, appeared as the Apostle of high degrees. The vanity of Frenchmen was flattered, and the coffers of Charles Edward were

filled by the sale of degrees, orders and high-sounding titles, which flowed in an uninterrupted stream from Ramsay's fertile brain. But even Ramsay was surpassed by the "divine Cagliostro," as the French called him. This man, whose real name was Joseph Balsamo, was without exception the most impudent impostor that ever breathed. He initiated into high degrees of masonry, professed to make gold, to perform miraculous cures, and to restore youth to the most broken-down debauchee. Exposed in Russia, he became the idol of Parisian society, until, flying from the French police, he fell into the hands of the inquisition at Rome, and there came to a miserable end.

The history of Freemasonry in France presents a spectacle almost without a parallel of absurd vanity, childish credulity, shameless imposture, and clumsy forgery. Pompous and absurd orders, Scotch and Egyptian, Emperors of the East and West, Knights Templars and Philosophers, engaged in internecine strife. Many of these have shared the fate of the Kilkenny cats, two rival Grand Lodges alone remain, the orthodox Grand Orient, and the Conseil Suprême of the so-called Scottish rite. Peace has been obtained, but only by giving legal sanction to every absurdity of spurious Masonry.

Germany received back Freemasonry in its modern form from England in 1737, and though for a short time French influence, and that expiring flare of magic, alchemy and theosophy, which preceded the rise of true science and philosophy, threatened to mar its fair form, yet the danger was averted by the efforts of the more judicious brethren. A society which could number among its most zealous and sincere members such men as Lessing, Goethe, Herder, Wieland, and Fichte might be tossed but could not founder in the storm; and it must be confessed that Freemasonry is now more select, has greater inherent strength, and is more of a reality in Germany than in any other country.

The English Masons have, indeed, preserved the form pure, but for our own part we do not view with much satisfaction what we must call its excessive growth. There is not much earnest life, not much insight into the philosophy of Masonry; yet it is but fair to give our English brethren credit for the fullest practice of "charity and brotherly love," though they be deficient in the "search after truth."

American Masonry may be briefly described as French Masonry without French pugnacity. They certainly can boast of more Grand Lodges, more members, and more degrees of masonic folly than the whole of the old world combined.

Freemasonry is proscribed by law in Russia, and except in Italy, where it is an offshoot of the French Orient, in the other European countries it is not sufficiently numerous or influential to call for separate notice.

To enable us to form a just notion of the true relation in which we stand, as well to the old Steinmetzen, as to the mystic associations of antiquity, we cannot do better than attend to Krause's statement of the several kinds of historical connection which may subsist between institutions of different periods.

"When we find in any nation or age, social efforts, resembling in aim and organization those of Freemasonry, we are by no means justified in seeing any closer connection between them than such as human nature everywhere, and in all ages, has in common, unless we are thoroughly convinced by most trustworthy facts that a really historical connection exists. And even such historical connections are very various in kind, for it is one thing when an institution flourishes through being constantly renewed by the addition of new members, though its field of action and constitution undergo at the same time repeated changes; another when we learn from history that from an already existing institution a perfectly new one takes its rise; and again, still different is it when a newly-formed society takes for its model the views, field of action, and social forms of one long since extinct."

With the Pagan mysteries and Eastern sects of mystics Freemasonry has nothing in common but the mere fact of

its having a secret and symbolic system; with the *collegia fabrorum* the connection, if any, is but of the third degree, though it is more than doubtful whether the founders of the earliest masonic lodges had ever heard of the building societies of Imperial Rome; but, though perfect continuity can only be asserted with the reorganized lodges of 1717-27, the fraternity had for a century and a half been so far modifying its spirit and its constitution, that the final transformation appears rather as the completion of long contemplated reforms, than as the establishment of a new order of things, and the Freemasons of the present day may justly claim, with a sort of ancestral pride, the Steinmetzen and operative guilds of the middle ages as their direct forerunners and forefathers in the mystic art.

The constitutions of the German Steinmetzen agree in every essential with those of modern Freemasonry. They were divided into the same degrees of apprentice, fellow craft, and master-mason; the government of the lodge, though simpler, was similar to ours, the moral qualifications for admission, the rite of initiation, and the secrets entrusted to the entered apprentice were the same, or nearly the same, as among modern Freemasons; so were the conduct of the lodge, the opening and closing ceremonies, and the subsequent banquet. The uninitiated were strictly excluded, and strange brethren submitted to close examination. The same fraternal equality among the members, the same obligation mutually to relieve one another when in distress, the same allegorical teaching derived from the symbolical meaning attached to the several instruments employed by the working mason, in short the whole of their rites and regulations were almost identical with what is now known as "pure and ancient Masonry."

Many authentic documents of the German Steinmetzen had long been known, but it was only in the year 1865 that Dr. Findel discovered in the British Museum, among the Sloane MSS,

one belonging to the English Operative Masons, which fully confirms the genuineness of those which had passed from the old architectural guilds to the original Grand Lodge of England at the commencement of the last century.

Such, then, has been the origin and progress of this remarkable institution which, from the little gathering at the Apple-Tree Tavern in Charles Street, Covent Garden, in February, 1717, has extended to every quarter of the globe. It is obviously impossible for a private individual to state with any approach to accuracy the numerical strength of the craft. We shall, however, not be far from the truth if we estimate the number of lodges in the world at between eight and nine thousand, holding under about seventy-five grand lodges, and comprising about 450,000 members.

Over sixteen hundred lodges in England and the Colonies are in connection with the English Grand Lodge, and considerably over 5,000 with the forty odd Grand Lodges in the United States. In Germany the lodges do not number much over four hundred, but they are individually far stronger than elsewhere, frequently mustering some hundreds of members.

It cannot be too strongly insisted on that Freemasonry is not a benefit society, as is often supposed. A benefit society is an insurance office, into which a man pays certain premiums, and from which he in return receives, in the event of sundry contingencies, as illness, accident, &c., certain pecuniary assistance. This he claims as a right—a *quid pro quo*. All masonic relief, on the contrary is voluntary, is dependent on the merits of the case, is fixed in amounts by no hard and fast lines, is given silently and unostentatiously, is, in short, "charity" in the truest import of the word.

The Grand Lodge has the disposal of a Fund of Benevolence, derived from fees and contributions received from the several lodges, amounting to between 6,000*l.* and 7,000*l.* per annum, though considerably more is occasionally sub-



scribed. About 3,000*l.* is given away, in sums ranging usually between 5*l.* and 30*l.*, to about 200 petitioners, and another 2,000*l.* or more, in grants of 50*l.* to 200*l.*, to special cases, the names of these latter brethren only appearing in the printed reports.

The greatest discretion is exercised in these awards; not only is the private character and the previous history of the petitioner subjected to strict investigation, but the time during which he has been a subscribing member of the craft, the earnestness and devotion which he has shown in the work of the lodge, and the amount of his contributions to charitable purposes when in more prosperous circumstances, are all taken into account. The time and the form of the relief are so adjudged that it may not be lost on the recipient, but that he may be thereby enabled to recover his independence, and to make a fresh start in life.

That the order should ever degenerate into a benefit society, or should offer a means of escape from the consequences of indolence or improvidence, is repugnant to the feelings of every loyal Mason.

In the year 1842 the Grand Lodge voted a sum for granting annuities to aged and distressed Masons, and seven years later the scheme was extended by the establishment of a like fund for widows, and the purchase of the Asylum at Croydon, where at present 130 masons and 100 widows are provided with rooms and pecuniary allowances.

The Institution for Boys was founded in 1798, when six boys, orphans of Masons, were clothed and put to school; this number was in 1810 increased to 50, and in 1813, soon after the union of the rival Grand Lodges, to 70, by amalgamation with a similar charity which had been founded in 1808 by Sir Francis Columbine Daniel, Knt., M.D., and by his noble exertions had already provided for nearly 1000 children. In 1857 the Grand Lodge purchased the estate at Wood Green, and erected the first building for the reception of the boys who

had hitherto been placed out at various schools. In 1865 the erection of a new and larger structure necessitated a loan of 10,000*l.*, the whole of which has been since paid off. At present 176 boys are entirely maintained until the age of sixteen, receiving according to their position either a classical or a sound modern and commercial education, and on leaving school are placed in offices or trades suited to their circumstances and abilities.

The Institution for Girls was first conceived by the Chevalier Bartolomeo Ruspini, surgeon dentist to King George III., in 1788, and thanks to the zealous co-operation of H.R.H. the Duchess of Cumberland, who enlisted the sympathy of many of the Royal Family, and of the nobility, it was opened in the following year for fifteen girls. In 1793 a school-house was erected near the Obelisk in St. George's Fields, Southwark, but the lease expiring in 1851 a new and commodious building was erected on three acres of freehold ground in an open and healthy situation adjoining Wandsworth Common. The girls remain here until they are sixteen years of age, when they return to their friends, or are placed in situations as governesses, or in houses of business. They receive an excellent practical education, taking their turn in all the domestic duties of the house, and being made expert needlewomen, but that the higher branches of instruction are not neglected, is shown by the number who pass with honours or obtain prizes at the Cambridge Local Examinations every year. The number of girls at present maintained in the school is 148.

The ordinary annual expenditure of these three institutions exceeds 21,000*l.*, yet though but 2,000*l.* is derived from dividends, large balances remain over every year.

Both schools are open, not only to orphans, but to the children of Masons reduced by misfortune. Every care is bestowed on the material, moral, and religious welfare of the children, who are

found in after life almost invariably to reflect credit on the Institution where they have been brought up. Many private lodges emulate one another in the appropriation of great part of their incomes to charitable uses; but even this, if it could be known, would give a very imperfect idea of the assistance and encouragement afforded by Masons to their less fortunate brethren. Votes and interest in elections of all kinds, nominations to schools, offices and appointments, patronage, custom, and acts of kindness and friendship have no ascertainable money value, but moral support is no less real than pecuniary help because it cannot be expressed in the form of a balance-sheet, and secrecy is the very essence of Masonic charity, as

it is of everything belonging to the craft.

Such then is Freemasonry, and to quote the words of a German brother—"Such a universal association is essentially necessary. All others, depending upon similarity of rank or calling, upon political opinions or religious creeds, suffer more or less from exclusiveness. This union of unions, which joins all good men into one family, in which the principle of equality, together with that of brotherly love, that is, love of the human race, is the predominant one, and the end and aim of all its moral influence upon others—*this is Freemasonry.*"

EDWARD F. WILLOUGHBY.

## A CHILD'S STORY.

WITH rosy cheeks and golden hair  
 And joyous smile, just turn'd of three,  
 He came and said that he must tell  
 A tale to me.

"Three little people," so he spoke,  
 "Went out to seek for God above,  
 And two of them were Faith and Hope,  
 The other Love.

They wander'd near, they wander'd far  
 But never found the God they sought,  
 And Faith and Hope were lost and gone  
 And came to nought."

I asked of Love, and where was he.  
 "Oh, mother, he is strong to bear;  
 He struggled on to God at last—  
 He now is there.

And I must go, and I must play."  
 He danced away with laughing eyes,  
 Blue as the glacier's sapphire depths,  
 Or summer skies.

But in my brain the baby tale  
 Reiterated o'er and o'er,  
 As if it were the last true word  
 Of this sad hour.

Oh, hope deferr'd! oh, faltering faith!  
 Weak forces doom'd to droop and die,  
 Not yours to find man's mystic God,  
 Now or eternally.

In Love, as yet but faintly known,  
 Lies all the future of our kind,  
 Cling to him, that on some far shore,  
 Faith, Hope, ye find.

A. J. G. D.

## BROADMOOR, AND OUR CRIMINAL LUNATICS.

EVERY one who reads the newspaper is familiar with the common expression occurring in the trials of prisoners who escape punishment on the ground of insanity, "To be detained during Her Majesty's pleasure;" but very few would be able to answer the question, What becomes of these persons? Those who desire to know their destination may incline to accompany us to Broadmoor in Berkshire, about four miles from the Bracknell station on the South Western Railway, and thirty miles from London. This is the State Criminal Asylum for England and Wales, and was erected fifteen years ago (1863), in conformity with an Act passed in 1860, which provided that criminal lunatics should be separately cared for by the State.

The site of the institution is well chosen, covers 300 acres, and commands an extensive and uninterrupted view. The building is of red brick, with a chapel in the centre, and consists of three stories, with distinct additional blocks at the extreme end. It is built on the corridor plan, with day rooms, and single and associated dormitories. The windows alone indicate, from outside, the character of the building, being protected by strong vertical iron bars. In some parts of the building, for the females, these bars do not extend to the whole height of the window, and escape would in such cases not be difficult. In other parts of this division, and throughout the male division, the windows are securely protected. In this and other ways the house is more secure than it was formerly. I find in regard to escapes that, from the opening of the asylum in 1863 up to the end of 1877, there have been not more than twenty-three. During the last three years there have been none. The majority were recaptured on the next, or fol-

lowing day; one not till three months; and four were never discovered. Four escaped from the airing court; three while out with a walking party; and four from breaking the window-guard; while one escaped from his bedroom by making an aperture in the wall. An attendant connived at one patient's escape, was prosecuted, and convicted. I may add that prior to the opening of Broadmoor, the proportion of escapes of criminal lunatics detained in England elsewhere was much greater. The opening of Broadmoor has also affected the mortality of this class, having reduced it materially. Some probably regard this as an actual disadvantage; but whatever political economists may say, medical science only sanctions, as yet at least, the adoption of that course of hygiene and treatment which most conduces to the prolongation of human life.

There were, when I visited Broadmoor, 500 inmates—400 men and 100 women, or thereabouts. When we consider that of these unfortunate people more than 300 have either murdered some one, or attempted to murder or maim some one, it may well cause reflection, alike sad and philosophical, on what a disordered brain may lead its possessor to do, what acts to commit. Ninety had killed their own children as well as, in some instances, the wife or husband; upwards of 20, their wives; 8, their mothers; 4, their fathers; and 1, both parents. And another reflection may be made, to the credit of the institution, that no case of actual murder has occurred since it was opened, and that, taking last year, good order was maintained, no premeditated act of violence was committed, and there was no suicide.

And yet no mechanical restraint was resorted to, no fetters, no strait-

waistcoats, no leglocks or straps. Some patients are of course secluded in a single room in which a bed made on the floor is the only furniture allowed, and in which the window is protected by a shutter if the patient breaks glass. The room is, when the shutter is closed, only partially dark, as there are two small windows near the ceiling, out of the patient's reach. By the side of the door is an inspection plate, or narrow slit in the wall, with a movable glazed frame, opening outwards, through which the occupant of the room can be observed when necessary. These rooms are well ventilated, and are warmed by means of hot water. I should not proceed further without stating that in addition to the class of cases to which I referred in the beginning of this paper—those namely detained during Her Majesty's pleasure, including those certified to be insane while awaiting their trial, or found insane on arraignment, or acquitted on the ground of insanity, or reprieved on this ground immediately after their sentence—besides these there are convicts who become insane while undergoing their penal servitude. As a rule, however, male convicts of this class are no longer sent to Broadmoor; Dr. Orange having discovered that it was necessary to keep insane convicts distinct from the other class, and to secure their safe detention more completely and certainly; that is to say, to separate lunatic criminals from criminal lunatics, or, as they are usually called, "Queen's pleasure men"—a distinction sometimes really as important as that which exists between a horse-chestnut and a chestnut horse. It will be readily understood that the convicts—really criminals, and often desperate criminals, they are—may differ widely from those who in an access of insanity have committed a crime, and that men who leave prison discipline at Pentonville, or elsewhere, to enjoy the comparative comfort of asylum life at Broadmoor, are very likely either to sham madness in order to stay there,

or escape in order to avoid having to complete on recovery their term of servitude. Anything better than *that*. In insisting on this distinct classification and accommodation, Dr. Orange did not, in the first instance, intend, I suppose, to prevent the convict class being provided for at Broadmoor; but having set the ball in motion, it went on and on; and instead of an additional building being erected for the convict men, a regulation was made in 1874 preventing their being sent in future to Broadmoor. For the women of this class there was and is ample room, an additional wing having been erected eleven years ago.

Again, there is a reason on the side of the prison authorities why convicts when insane should not be sent to Broadmoor. They are naturally unwilling that the history of their previous treatment should be known and scrutinised at another place. Hence they greatly prefer retaining them in the prisons, or in one of them in which provision has been specially made for insane convict men.

It will probably occur to some to ask whether many or any of those who are "Queen's pleasure men" (or women) are found to have been improperly acquitted when subjected to the careful and prolonged medical scrutiny which a residence at Broadmoor allows of; whether, in short, mercy, based on medical knowledge, has mistakenly interfered with the proper action of justice and law? In this matter the doctors and the lawyers are frequently on opposite sides, and the former often find it hard work to rescue an insane prisoner from the clutches of the law. On the other hand it may be admitted that, as regards some physicians at least, a wider view is sometimes as necessary as it is on the part of the lawyers. When absurd reasons are given in the witness-box for a prisoner's insanity—reasons which would equally establish the madness of many persons in society whom no one regards as insane—it is not surprising that the judges are



cautious in admitting the plea of insanity on medical evidence. In seeking a reply to the above question, it is satisfactory to find that, if the evidence of medical experts tends to induce juries to acquit on the ground of insanity those who are responsible agents and ought to be punished, there have only been a few scattered cases admitted which were "doubtful"—whether at Bethlem, when criminal lunatics were sent there, before Broadmoor existed, or at the latter since it was opened. It is also a satisfaction to know that cases of this kind have not been more frequent of late than formerly; and this, although there has been during the last forty years a marked increase in the number acquitted on the ground of insanity. Thus from 1836 to 1848, the ratio of the insane to the prisoners tried was only 1 in 32; between 1848 and 1862 it was 1 in 17; and between 1862 and 1874 as many as 1 in 14.<sup>1</sup> It is surely much better that a man should occasionally escape the punishment he deserves, than that any should be punished who labour under mental disease. To show the difficulty of arriving at a conclusion as to the mental responsibility of persons charged with crime, I may mention the case of a schoolmaster who, about eighteen months ago, used his cane on a boy in a very savage manner, pursued him under the table, and destroyed the sight of one eye. This man was sentenced to five years penal servitude. He was of course under the notice of the surgeon of the prison to which he was sent, and was regarded by him as sane. The schoolmasters and pupil-teachers, however, took the case up, and agitated for further examination into the state of the man's mind. Dr. Orange was employed to examine him, and, thoroughly familiar with criminal lunatics, succeeded in discovering unmistakable proofs of insanity. In fact he was so poorly the morning of the day he committed this assault, so

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of the Statistical Society*, vol. xxxviii. (Guy).

uncomfortable in his head, and so irritable in mind, that he sent word to the school to say that he was too ill to attend to his duties. It was a school examination, however, and the authorities insisted upon his going. They therefore were mainly to blame for the circumstance which followed. This man was saved from punishment by Dr. Orange's representations, and subsequent observation confirmed the opinion he formed at the time, that he was not only irritable and suspicious, but was labouring under a delusion. He was a dangerous lunatic, in short, when he committed the offence.

In going through the wards I conversed with the superintendent on the main points of interest in connection with the management of the institution, and on some of the characteristics presented by those who go there.

I remarked on the low mortality which I knew obtained there. "Ah," said the doctor, laughing, "that goes against us, rather than for us. We are blamed for keeping the patients too well!" Since the opening of the asylum, the yearly average of deaths has been at the rate of 2·88 per cent of the numbers resident. As to diet it is no doubt difficult to understand why this class should fare better, as they seem to do, than ordinary patients in the county asylums. In one particular, indeed, a change in the direction of economy has been made, and a very reasonable change it is. It is connected with an important question which arises, How far can the system of rewards for work be beneficially carried out

It appears that until two or three years ago, the main reward for useful work was a luncheon of bread and cheese and beer in the forenoon, with another, though smaller, allowance of beer in the afternoon. Both these allowances of beer (which were additional to the dinner supply) were discontinued in 1875, and in lieu of them a small portion of the money value of the work done was credited to the workers, with permission to spend it

on any trifling luxury they might desire. It was found that the executed value of the work in the shoemakers' shop in 1876 was more than that done in 1873 (the year before this experiment was tried), by 160 per cent, whilst in the tailors' shop the increase was 120 per cent; corresponding results being obtained in other departments. Hence, in spite of the gratuities to the patients so employed, the yearly cost has been considerably reduced. During last year the saving *in beer alone* amounted to 165*l.*, whilst the saving in paid labour was very much greater.

Financial considerations must be a very important practical point in the existence of Broadmoor. The State pays for it; an annual grant from the House of Commons must be asked for, and the Government must be prepared to show that the amount is not unreasonable. Now the weekly cost of the inmates is about a guinea each. That of the inmates of our county asylums averages about half that sum. It may therefore not unreasonably be asked, Why is this? What have the criminal lunatics done to deserve so much more money being lavished upon them? The chief reason is, that a greater proportion of attendants must be provided for this class, and that is costly. At Broadmoor the proportion of attendants to patients is one in five; in asylums generally, much less liberal, say one in eleven; besides which they are paid better (as they ought to be) at Broadmoor. However, it is very right that this subject should be thoroughly inquired into and considered.

A considerable number of the inmates are, as has been intimated, usefully employed. Thus during the year 1876, one hundred and sixty-seven men and women were occupied in one way or other, in addition to reading and writing, music, &c. Eighty-six were employed in making and repairing clothing for patients, and bed and house linen for patients and attendants; one hundred and forty-four in

cleaning the wards; forty in the garden and on the farm; twenty-nine in the laundry; twenty-six in making or repairing uniform clothing, boots and shoes, &c.; seventeen in making and repairing furniture, mattresses, mats, carpets, &c. We went into one room where there was a printing-press, and a printer handed me the printed programme of a concert shortly to be held in the asylum. The total value of the labour of patients alone amounted, in 1876, to 1,940*l.*

In the carrying out of a system of labour so beneficial to the patient, and so useful to the institution, relaxation and amusement are not forgotten. The patients play at chess, draughts, billiards, bagatelle, &c.; and out-of-door games comprise bowls, cricket, and croquet. There is a library well supplied with papers and journals; and one patient was pointed out who himself contributes to a magazine. There is a band which includes seventeen patients, as well as some attendants, and enlivens the inmates twice in the course of the week.

This sounds very pleasant, but honesty requires us to give the other side of the picture, as portrayed in the words of Mr. Burt, the chaplain; and perhaps nothing serves better to show how much credit is due to the superintendent for the admirable management of an institution containing such elements as these. He said (some years ago) that although he had laboured in asylums and prisons for a long period it had never fallen to his lot before to witness depravity and unhappiness in such aggravated forms. "In other asylums, when the mind resumes anything like healthy action, there is hope of discharge; in prisons, the period of detention, however long, has some definite duration; but here the fear of relapse, and the terrible acts to which relapse may lead, render the condition of release rarely attainable; for many the period of detention is indefinite, and hope is almost excluded. In prison, whatever may be the depravity, it is kept under some restraint by reason

and by fear of consequences ; but here there are patients with passions depraved to the utmost, upon whom neither reason, nor shame, nor fear impose any restraint."

One Sunday, about twelve years ago, during the Communion, and when the chaplain was in the middle of the collect for the Queen, an event took place, the account of which I take from his own description. A patient with a sudden yell rushed at Dr. Meyer (then the superintendent), who was kneeling, surrounded by his family, close to the altar, and a deadly blow was struck at his head with a large stone slung in a handkerchief. The stone inflicted a serious injury, and the blow would have been fatal, if it had not been somewhat turned aside by the promptness with which the arm of the patient was seized by an attendant. A scene of so dreadful a character has very rarely been witnessed in a Christian church. Is it surprising that Mr. Burt cannot look back upon this occurrence without horror, and that he has never felt able to say the particular collect which was interrupted in so awful a manner ?

Many are the moral lessons which might be enforced from a knowledge of the cases admitted at Broadmoor, and their previous history. Among these the evil of gross ignorance might well be illustrated by such an example as this. Two years ago a farm labourer was tried in Warwickshire for murdering a woman eighty years of age. He believed in witches, and laboured under the delusion that this poor old creature, with others in the village, held him under the spell of witchcraft. Returning from his work one day, and carrying a pitchfork in his hand, he saw this woman. He immediately ran at her, struck her on the legs thrice, and then on the temple, till he knocked her down. From these injuries she died. Well, it was found that he had the delusion that he was tormented by witches, to which he attributed his bodily ailments, and was ever ready with Scripture quotations in favour of witchcraft. His

mind, apart from delusions, was weak. The jury acquitted him on the ground of insanity, and he was admitted at Broadmoor in January, 1876.

One lesson there is which ought to be learnt from the history of many of the cases sent to Broadmoor, and that is, the extreme importance of not disregarding the early symptoms of insanity. Had these been promptly recognised, and those who suffered from them been subjected to medical care and treatment, the acts they committed, the suffering they caused, the odium they brought upon themselves and their families, would alike have been prevented. The diffusion of a knowledge of the first indications of this insidious disease, and of what it may culminate in, is the only safeguard against the terrible acts which from time to time startle the community, and which are found, when too late, to have been perpetrated by those who ought to have been under medical restraint.

Bearing immediately upon this, is the fact that there were recently out of the cases of murder in Broadmoor, twenty-nine cases in which insanity had been recognised before the act was committed, but the persons were regarded as harmless, and thirty-three in which it was not regarded as harmless, but insufficient precautions were taken. In seventy-five cases no one had possessed sufficient knowledge to recognise it at all.

It must not be supposed that although the utility and success of Broadmoor are so great, all has been done in the way of providing asylums which the necessity of the case requires. Far from it. There are a vast number of weak-minded persons at large, most dangerous to the community, some of whom have not yet been in prison, while others have. In 1869 there were in Millbank one hundred and forty weak-minded, and also twenty-five of an allied type, the "half sharp." Whether they have been imprisoned or not, they ought to be placed under supervision of some kind. Prob-

ably the best place for them would be the newly-built imbecile asylums. This is one of the many advantages which would be gained by carrying out the recent recommendations of a special Committee of the Charity Organization Society on Idiots, Imbeciles, &c.

Two practical suggestions in conclusion, in addition to the proposal for imbecile asylums. The number of instances in which life is sacrificed, and the still larger number of instances in which threats of injury or damage short of homicide, destroy family happiness, through the lunacy of one of its members, renders it highly desirable that greater facilities should exist for placing such persons under restraint (we do not refer now to imbeciles) before a dreadful act is committed, to say nothing of terminating the frightful domestic unhappiness. In most of these cases there is but slight apparent intellectual disorder, although careful investigation would frequently discover a concealed delusion, and the greatest difficulty exists in obtaining a certificate of lunacy from two medical men. They shrink from the responsibility. Nothing is done. Prolonged misery or a terrible catastrophe is the result. To avoid this, there might be a power vested in the Commissioners in Lunacy to appoint, on application, two medical men, familiar with insanity, to examine a person under such circumstances. Their certificate that he or she ought to be placed under care should be a sufficient warrant for admission into an asylum, and they should not be liable to any legal consequences. It should not be necessary for the signers of the certificate to adhere to the usual statutory form. The Commissioners

should have power to grant an application of this kind, whether made by a member of the family or by a respectable inhabitant of the place in which the alleged lunatic resides; his respectability, if necessary, being attested by the mayor.

The other suggestion has reference to the strange and clumsy way in which the English law goes to work to discover whether a man charged with crime and suspected to be insane is so in reality. It is a chance in the first place whether he is examined by a medical man at all. If he can afford counsel, and the plea of insanity is set up, medical testimony is adduced of a one-sided character, and, more likely than not, counter medical evidence is brought forward by the prosecution. Thus physicians enter the court as partizans, and being in a false position, often present an unfortunate spectacle; while, worst of all, the truth is not elicited. Then it not unfrequently happens that after the trial the thing is done which should have been done previously; experts in insanity are employed to decide upon the prisoner's state of mind. The court should call such experts to their assistance at the trial, and, what is most important, ample time should be allowed to examine the suspected lunatic. In France the "*Juge d'instruction*" requests a neutral expert to examine and report upon the accused, and I have recently been assured by physicians in Paris with whom I have discussed this point, that the plan works well. Is it too much to hope that common sense will guide our own law-makers to introduce a similar practice?

D. HACK TUKE, M.D.

## OUR FOREIGN FOOD SUPPLIES.

CONSIDERABLE attention has of late been given to the subject of our food imports. While our general foreign trade continued active there was nothing heard but congratulations on the wonderful growth it displayed. The totals for each year were quoted with a kind of bewildered admiration and wonder, and few thought of questioning in the least what these totals might mean. Hard times, low prices, absence of demand for the products of our industry, and heavy stocks on hand have changed this feeling of self-satisfied pride into one of anxiety, and we find people now seriously doubting whether we be not rushing headlong to ruin. It has amongst other things been discovered that we have, as a people, year by year grown more dependent on foreign sources for our food supply. We now buy so much corn, meat, cheese, and other articles of consumption abroad, that it has been roundly asserted we should be in great danger of starvation were any of our chief foreign sources of supply suddenly to fail us, or should our export trade dwindle to a point that would prevent us from being able to buy food abroad at the rate we now find it necessary to do. That is the extreme pessimist view.

On the other hand, sanguine and headstrong political economists do not scruple to maintain that we are safe and comfortable, in spite of our inability to feed ourselves on home-grown products, and that so long as we are an active, industrious nation it does not much matter whether we sell any goods abroad or not. We shall always be rich, and therefore always able to buy whatever we want, no matter what market we have to go to.

I do not propose to try to settle

the dispute between these upholders of extremes, for it would be quite impossible to satisfy either that it was settled. Knotty points in political economy, and above all in what I may call statistical economy, are the most difficult things in the world to get over in a satisfactory fashion, partly because statistics are often to a considerable extent a refined and subtle product of the imagination. It is the imagination which gives form and colour to the dry tables of figures, which makes percentages live and breed inferences; and too often it proves the easiest thing in the world for the busy statistician first to imagine his figures, and then to make them allure people to a most fantastic dance after shadows.

There are however a few figures in regard to the food we eat which seem to me to tell a plain story with a reasonable amount of accuracy. They are not very burdensome, or need not be; but they are interesting, and worth study. In approaching them, all I shall ask the reader to do is to dismiss from his mind, as far as he can, both the optimist and the pessimist view of our position as food importers, and to approach the subject as much as possible free of bias. This will enable us to get closer to the true facts, and thus, perhaps, any inferences drawn therefrom may prove to some extent sound.

One fact certainly stands out very prominently on the threshold of this subject. Our imports of articles of consumption have increased to an enormous extent in both quantity and value within the last twenty years. The net imports of such articles came to but 58,400,000*l.* or so in 1857, and last year they reached a total value



of over 160,000,000*l*. This sum is not of course all paid for articles of human food alone, as has been well observed by Mr. Stephen Bourne, of Her Majesty's Customs, in his paper on *The Nature and Extent of our Foreign Food Supplies*. There are many articles which are used for other purposes than food for the people: maize, oats, barley, and the like being much used for feeding cattle. But the articles I have included are all in some shape articles of consumption, as will be seen from the list given at foot,<sup>1</sup> and do not include even guano, which Mr. Bourne thinks ought to be taken into the list for the reason that it is a fertiliser; and whether consumed by man or beast, it is surely a very striking fact that the country should now import fully three times the food it did twenty years ago. It is no mere fortuitous increase either. The growth has been steady, and nearly uniform. We are to all appearance less affected now by the quality of our harvests, either in the bulk or the price of our food imports, than we were before 1860. Only ten years ago the value of the consumable articles retained in the country was but 95,000,000*l*. The growth has therefore been much in excess of the increase in population. That has grown only some 17 per cent in the twenty years, but the value of the food imports has grown fully 177 per cent, taking last year's valuation. What can be the cause of this portentous extension of the eating capacity of the nation?

<sup>1</sup> The following is the list of articles which I have taken as articles of consumption in the statement given in the text:—Animals (cattle, sheep, swine), bacon and hams, wheat, barley, oats, maize, &c., beef, butter, cheese, chicory, cochineal, coffee, cocoa, currants, eggs, fruit, hops, lard, meats, pork, oranges, potatoes, poultry, raisins, rice, spices, spirits, sugar, tea, tobacco, and wine. There are unenumerated articles besides these of which it is impossible to form any estimate; but allowing for the value of these it may be taken that, after deducting the re-exports, the figures I have given in the text are under- rather than over-estimates.

One cause is unquestionably our greater extravagance. We are extravagant not only in the amount of luxuries which we consume, but in our use of articles of food or drinks which could be dispensed with, at least without injury to health, or with little diminution of comfort. To some extent this extravagance is probably due to the greater artificiality of our mode of living. The strain which this puts upon us compels us not merely to eat more, but to resort to nerve-stimulants to an extent which would be probably both unnecessary and injurious in more favourable circumstances of existence. No doubt also the masses of the people have been for some time in a position to spend more freely than they could do in former days, and the result has been a profusion in our outlay on articles of food and drink probably without parallel except in some of our colonies.

At the same time it has to be observed that to all appearance this profusion has not been greatest in articles of exclusively foreign production, of pure luxury, or whose use was formerly almost denied to the bulk of the people. Nearly every article of consumption has been bought by us in augmented quantities of late years; but our greatest purchases have not been in exotic articles, but in those common staples of food which we can produce at home. The article butter, for example, was imported at the average rate of only 1·6 lb. per head in the three years 1857 to 1859; for the three years 1865 to 1867 the average was 4·2 lb.; and for the three years 1875 to 1877, the average was 5·4 lb. Thus the import of this one article has multiplied some four-fold in twenty years time; and as butter is, or was, for a large part of the community a kind of luxury, we have here strong testimony in support of the contention that the spending habits and capacity of the nation have been of late years much stimulated. The following table, into which I have thrown similar calculations in

respect of other articles, will make this fact more striking still.

ARTICLES OF FOOD OR LUXURY.	AVERAGE CONSUMPTION PER HEAD IN THE YEARS		
	1857-9.	1865-7.	1875-7.
Cheese ..... lb.	1.5	3.6	5.3
Coffee ..... "	1.3	1.03	0.78
Wheat and wheat flour ..	78.4	112.6	177.9
Currants, raisins ..	2.4	4.0	4.4
Raw sugar ..... "	31.9	41.5*	62.3*
Spirits ..... galls.	0.17	0.26	0.34
Tea ..... lb.	2.6	3.5	4.5
Tobacco ..... "	1.2	1.3	1.5
Wine ..... galls.	0.23	0.43	0.52

\* Includes refined, not given in early returns.

I have taken the figures for the year 1877 from the monthly Customs and Board of Trade returns, the corrected annual statement of trade not being published at the date of this writing. These are accurate enough for all practical purposes, and the percentages brought out may be taken as closely representing the actual facts. They are surely startling enough. In the case of every single article, except coffee, the per head consumption has increased enormously since 1857, and the increase has been marked at each period selected. There can be no doubt of the fact that we are eating, drinking, and smoking more of these articles per head than we did but ten years ago. And the increase is not confined to articles exclusively of human consumption. The increase in the import of potatoes, maize, and rice has also been enormous, and indicates either that there are many more animals to feed now than the country possessed a few years ago, or that our home production is at the very least stationary. If the country is able to feed only twenty millions of people, say, with their attendant lower animals, it will of course follow that the higher the number of human beings and livestock which has to be fed, the greater relatively must become the per-head proportion of foreign articles of food imported for consumption. In other words, each additional being beyond the number sustainable out of home

products, and having to be entirely fed from foreign sources, would raise the average proportion apparently required by the whole. Now if the imports of luxuries and exotic articles of food are increasing less rapidly than those of articles imported to supply recent home production, we are surely warranted in concluding that to some degree, at all events, this higher ratio must be due to our growing poverty in home resources. The consumption of tea has not doubled in twenty years, nor that of tobacco, spirits, or raisins; coffee has fallen off, and sugar has hardly doubled. On the other hand the import of wheat and flour has more than doubled, and that of cheese has nearly quadrupled. If we go further a-field, and take such articles as potatoes, rice, barley, oats, maize, the proportions become, for the most part, more marked still.

ARTICLES OF CONSUMPTION.	AVERAGE CONSUMPTION PER HEAD IN THE YEARS		
	1857-9.	1865-7.	1875-7.
Potatoes ..... lb.	4.3	3.6	21.09
Maize ..... "	23.76	47.04	162.4
Oats ..... "	16.6	32.1	41.5
Barley ..... "	23.9	27.0	38.1
Rice ..... "	6.5	3.4	11.5

The "per head" computation is of course in these cases a very rough way of testing the shortness of the home food supply of the people; but it is the only one available, and whether these articles are all used for human food or not makes little matter to the question in hand. The point to be brought out is the remarkable fact that the consumption of articles of food, whether for man or beast, imported to supplement home resources, is increasing at a more rapid rate than the consumption of purely exotic articles. How are we to account for this? It has already been hinted that the higher prosperity of the nation of late years has enabled it to eat more. A very excellent authority, Mr. James Caird, computes that the per-head consump-

tion of wheat, home and foreign, is now over 340 lb. compared with 311 lb. some thirty years ago, and there can at all events be no question that fewer people starve when wheat is cheap than when it is dear. It is however more than doubtful whether this satisfactorily accounts for the enormously-augmented import of some kinds of articles of consumption which has marked our recent foreign trade. There are indications, it seems to me, that our own soil is yielding much less in several respects, and that we have been compelled to supplement our scanty resources to a greater extent on that account. Apart altogether from the question whether we have not had a series of peculiarly unfortunate crops of late, it is surely very striking that such an article as maize, for example, should be so largely used now for feeding horses, and that the import of oats should have considerably more than doubled within twenty years. We can hardly say that cheap food has the same influence in enlarging the consumption of cattle and horses that it has in the case of human beings, and it is a remarkable fact that alongside the growing imports of grains used partly or mainly as food for the lower animals, there has been a decrease in some descriptions of our live-stock. According to the last-published agricultural returns of Great Britain, our stock of cattle in 1876 was  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent less than in 1875, and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent less than in 1874, and that in spite of the fact that a larger area of our soil seems to have been under permanent or artificial grasses. This decrease may have been, and probably was, temporary, and was perhaps to a small extent compensated for by an increase in the number of horses; but, for all that, there seems no getting over the fact that the yield of the soil of this country is less than it was, and that we must put down to that falling off a portion of the enormous increase in our imports of necessary articles of food.

There appears, moreover, to be no doubt upon the point, that the acreage under corn crops within the United Kingdom tends to decrease. The acreage under wheat<sup>1</sup> was 11 per cent lower in 1875 than in 1876, and 22 per cent lower than in 1869, when the area was greater than in any other year from 1868 to 1876; and it is a well-recognised fact that the tendency of farming in this country has been to convert arable land into pasture. Free trade and the superabundant foreign supply of all kinds of cereals are, in short, working a revolution in the position of the British farmer, and he has been finding it to his advantage to raise beef and mutton and pork instead of grain. What he will do when foreign cheap beef and mutton compel him to lower his prices for his cattle and sheep it would be hard to say. It looks as if he would be crushed in pieces between the nether millstone of the landlord's exactions and the grinding pressure of foreign competition.

However we account for it, the fact stands out most prominently that this country is now much more dependent upon foreign sources of food supply than it was a few years ago, and that as the population grows the extent of this dependence increases at a more and more rapid rate. This being so, two main questions present themselves to the mind as above all others demanding a clear answer. The first is—Can this country rely upon always having its wants in this respect fully supplied from abroad? and the second—Can we afford to continue paying for food at the rate we now do without impoverishment?

The first question may, I believe, be unhesitatingly answered in the affirmative. Our population is practically in no danger of suffering from starvation because of failures in crops. From all parts of the world we can now draw an abundance of grain, and the appliances of modern science have made many other kinds of food produced in distant countries accessible to us to

<sup>1</sup> *Agricultural Returns for 1876*, p. 8.

an extent which only the older amongst us can at all adequately realise. Confining our attention to cereals alone, so as to make the matter more simple, we find that within the past dozen years the extension of the area whence this country can draw its supplies of food has been quite unprecedented.

In the early part of the present century, and for long afterwards, England was dependent on the Continent of Europe for its supplementary supply of grain, and principally upon the wheat-crops of Poland, Central Russia, Turkey, and France. Up to 1869 Russia may be said to have held the lead in our market, and Prussia was a more regular, if less fitfully abundant source of supply than the United States. But since 1869 at the latest, the intermittent signs of successful competition shown by California and other parts of the American Union have given place to a supremacy with which no country in Europe has been able to compete. While the average import of wheat from Russia has been but about 10,500,000 cwt. since 1865, the import from the United States has increased from an average of about 5,600,000 cwt. in 1865-69 to nearly 25,500,000 cwt. in 1872-76. America has thus beaten Russia entirely as a permanent and apparently inexhaustible source of food. The interior of that great continent has been stripped of much of its forest, and intersected by lines of railway in all directions; and as a result a population has been scattered over the solitudes of the vast plains which has been able to grow corn enough, and at a rate cheap enough, to drive all other competitors to the wall. The great outlay which Russia has been at to secure the same end has only resulted in the bare maintenance of the position which she held when our demands for foreign wheat were much smaller than they are now. This amounts to a very serious defeat, and it is worse with Germany, France, Austria, and Turkey, which have all as it were declined as sources of supply.

America, however, has not been alone in coming forward with cereals of late years in increased quantities, and nothing can well be more impressive than the progress which has been made in this respect by India, South Australia, Canada, and Chili. We depend on so extended an area now that we may be said to be almost independent of any single country. Were the harvest in the United States to fail for a season—a most improbable occurrence—it is possible that we should have very dear bread; but to any eventuality short of that we may be pronounced nearly invulnerable. The balancing of chances which the present state of the corn supply affords does much, therefore, to equalise prices and to keep bread from growing dear. If the harvest fails in Egypt it may be superabundant in India; or if bad in Illinois and Michigan, it may be excellent in California and Oregon. In the same way war cannot now have the same disturbing influence on prices which it had in former days. Forgetting the changed circumstances under which we live, corn speculators tried to make bread dear on the outbreak of the war between Russia and Turkey; but they signally failed; and that, too, in spite of the help given them by a very bad harvest in Great Britain. Short of the destruction of our mercantile navy and the free trade of our ports, we may say, then, that it would be impossible to put bread in these islands up to famine prices. At the very beginning of this century wheat rose to over 6*l.* per quarter; but in all human probability there need be no apprehension of its being so dear again within any time that we could forecast. There may be elements of trouble ahead of us arising from this dependence on foreign sources for our bread; a tendency to exhaust the soil may be displayed by the settlers in new countries; and the slow or rapid thickening of populations in these countries may possibly leave less grain by and by for export, or compel higher prices to be paid for

it; but these dangers are remote, and need scarcely trouble us. Hardly anything, in short, could exceed the strength of our position if the sources of food-supply are looked at alone. Almost every year adds to these, and increases our chances of having a steady supply of cheap food of all kinds.

The case is altogether different, however, when we turn to the question of our ability to pay for this food. Those pretty, if somewhat sentimental, theorists to whom I have referred tell us glibly that, as far as mere trade goes, we could afford to live, as the north country people say, "within ourselves." Were our foreign trade to disappear we should, according to these people, still be rich, great, and, I suppose, not hungry. The bread bill, to my mind, interposes an insurmountable difficulty against the acceptance of this sugared assurance. Last year the cereals alone which we imported cost us more than 63,000,000*l*. The total bill for articles of consumption amounted to considerably more than a third of the value of the entire imports, and was within less than 40,000,000*l*. of the total declared value of our exports. There is obviously but one way of paying this huge bill in the long run. If we cannot exact all we want as mere tribute or interest, we must sell as many goods, or do as much work abroad, as will meet the bill, and meet also the price of the imported raw materials which are used in our manufactures—else we shall grow poorer year by year. In other words, this great dependence on foreign-raised articles of consumption impresses upon us, broadly speaking, the necessity of doing an enormous selling business abroad at all times, under pain of not being able to continue to feed ourselves. It is plausibly said that there is no evidence at the moment of this great necessity. We have been confessedly doing a smaller and a very unprofitable export trade of late years, and yet our food imports have con-

tinued to expand without stint or stay. Therefore, some people argue, it is demonstrated that if we are but industrious, we can pay for our food, whether we have an export trade or not. This sort of argument seems to me to be nothing but pure nonsense. It leaves out of sight some of the most patent facts in the case. We have been able to pay for our heavy food bill of late years because, for one thing, we have saved much money by our foreign trade in former years, and have lent it abroad at usury. To take an example. By reason of our thrift and, formerly, most profit-giving trade, we have been able to buy and hold many millions worth of bonds of the United States debt, and these bonds have, for a year past at least, been exchanged by us for corn. The American people have, in other words, sold us so much corn, and bought from us so few articles of manufacture, that they have been able to say to us, "Give us back some of our bonds." The amount thus paid back by England has been variously estimated, but is probably not less than from 50,000,000*l*. to 60,000,000*l*. within the past two years, and the same process is going on in regard to other countries, by whose indebtedness to us this nation has hitherto been enriched.

And what is the practical effect of this return of invested capital to us in the shape of food to eat, if not to make us poorer? If we sell our French, Russian, Egyptian, and United States bonds in order to pay our food bill, we eat up not merely so much capital, but lose all chance of interest on that capital, and are left by the amount of this interest less able to buy abroad than we were while we had it. Therefore we must in future sell more of our manufactures if the import account is to be balanced and kept at its present level. Doubtless our foreign investments are still very great, and in some respects extending. We are putting more money into India and into our colonies every year, and this money in most instances enables



us to command the products of these countries, whether we sell them our goods or not. But the rate at which we have done this of late has not been nearly equal to the rate at which our necessities or our extravagance has increased our demands for foreign articles of consumption. I very much doubt, indeed, whether we have during the past four years saved in any form as much as we have lost, or have been compelled to spend; and if that conclusion be sound, the nation is now distinctly poorer than it was five years ago. It may not be so exclusively because the food bill has been larger, for trade has been unprofitable; but to some extent that is the cause, and consequently if we are to maintain the level of past expenditure in this direction we must do a much larger and a much more profitable export trade than we have lately done. This seems to me a plain deduction from facts, whose bearings are visible on the surface.

Whether we shall or shall not do such a trade, I should not take it upon me to determine. The moral of this essay is to point out first of all that altogether apart from the question of our capacity for doing such a trade, or the likelihood of our doing it, the position which we now hold as a food-importing nation is a dangerous one. We are accustomed to hear it said that so long as we are able to buy our food cheap it does not matter what or how much we import. We are a nation of manufacturers, and as such it is not our business to grow corn, but to make cloth, steam-engines, ships, anything that the world wants. This is no doubt true in a sense, but it is also true that if we place ourselves in the position of having to pay more for our food than other countries, which may also in time be able to manufacture, though they may not be able to do so to-day, we are playing what must prove to be in the long run a losing game. And nothing is more clear than that we are at present paying higher prices for the staple of our food than some of our own

colonies pay, or than the United States, because these can sell to us at a handsome profit. We pay the prices which these can afford to sell at, *plus* freights at the very least, and therefore to the extent of a portion of the additional cost to us, their populations should be able, other things being equal, to live cheaper than ours. As a matter of fact, bread and meat are not so dear in our Australian colonies or in the United States, as they are here, and therefore were the populations of those countries denser, and their mineral resources developed, they ought to be most formidable competitors against us. They have not materially hurt us heretofore, chiefly because population and capital have been in our favour. Abundance of capital alone is for a time as important an element in profitable manufacture as cheapness of bread and meat, and of it we have had such a superabundance that we have lent what we could not ourselves use at rates high enough to more than neutralise in the borrowing countries the other advantages which they may have had. But this state of things is rapidly changing, our own extravagance alone, as we have shown, causing part of this capital to flow away from us to new centres of business, and as this process goes on, and population thickens in these new countries, and as resources become developed there, we shall find ourselves more and more hampered by this bread question. The wages difficulty is wrapped up in it, and almost all that relates to our supremacy as a manufacturing people.

Far be it from me to seek to exaggerate the difficulties which lie ahead of us. It may be that the excessive expenditure of this country on food for the past few years has been to a slight extent caused by the prevalence of bad harvests, and we must not jump at the conclusion that ruin is at hand. A cycle of good harvests might relieve the pressure considerably, and lift the load for a time off the backs of our almost insolvent farming interests.

But, after all, ups and downs of this kind are more or less accidents which can at best only accelerate a little or somewhat retard the inevitable outcome of a wasteful policy. If our land is but half tilled, if hurtful social laws both hinder its higher tillage and overburden the tiller with unbearable charges so that he is handicapped in the competition with the most distant countries, nothing can, I believe, save us from ultimate impoverishment, no matter what our industry as weavers and spinners, miners and metal workers may in the meantime be.

The only safeguard which we at present have lies not so much in our trade supremacy as in the fact that we can lay nearly every nation on the earth under tribute to us. If we could continue to do this for an indefinite period and to an indefinitely great extent just at our pleasure, there might be little to alarm us in the present position of affairs. But we cannot do so, and every step which other countries take in calling home their debt to us, or in repudiating it, places us more and more under the necessity of becoming, as it were, payers of tribute if we are to live. Instead of having the resources of the world at our command, we are driven to beg the world to be so very kind as to buy enough of our wares to prevent us from starving. Who shall declare what a reversal of the position such as

this implies may bring us to, or how far it may tend to strain the national resources and sap the material strength of the empire?

This general consideration has appeared to me more important than the mere discussion of our chances as traders, because here lies the true danger of our unprecedented dependence on foreign bread and meat. That dependence ought by all means to be diminished if we are to continue at the head of the nations; and no matter how cheaply we may seem to buy, if we neglect the development of our own soil for the fleeting gains of a kind of trade which has flitted from point to point since the world began, never settling long anywhere, assuredly the day must come when we must face poverty, and be, so to say, driven to beg for bread.

A conclusion to our history like this is probably at worst very remote, but it is with the drift and tendency of things we have to do, and if the signs are that we are in any degree going towards ruin, no matter though the ruin may not come in sight within a hundred years, we ought to set about mending our ways. Unthrift and waste in any direction is unspeakably expensive, and unthrift in the treatment of the soil is sooner or later positive destruction to a nation.

A. J. WILSON.

## DEATH AT THE GOAL.

*(Suggested by the old Legend that one of the Crusaders died of joy on his first sight of Jerusalem.)*

He sailed across the glittering seas that swept  
 In music toward the East ;  
 Far off, along the shore, the nations wept—  
 People, and king, and priest.

For every land was heavy with the grief  
 That one fair city bore,  
 And half the world was gone to her relief,  
 Half wept upon the shore.

He heard that sound of anger and of tears,  
 And in his steadfast eye  
 Resolve to right the bitter wrong of years  
 Shone yet more stern and high.

And nearer every day the sunrise glowed,  
 And filled his heart with fire,  
 Still drawing him swiftly onward, till it showed  
 The land of his desire.

He touched the shore, and knelt with tears at length  
 To kiss the sacred strand,  
 Then rose to seek, clad in a solemn strength,  
 The city of the land.

Across the low pale hills he took his way,  
 By dreary tower and tomb,  
 Across the plains of Sharon, where to-day  
 The rose forgets to bloom ;

Till, at the lighting of the evening fires  
 Along the western sky,  
 He saw the promised home of his desires  
 In royal beauty lie.

O city, sorrowful, yet full of grace !  
 The sinking sun adorns  
 With a celestial smile thine altered face  
 Beneath its crown of thorns.

The heavy storms of rage and trouble beat  
 Around thy sacred heart ;  
 Thou hast a deadly wound, yet strangely sweet  
 And beautiful thou art.

And thou hast drawn, from all the colder lands  
Beyond the western sea,  
Hearts burning for thy wrongs, and eager hands  
To fight for God and thee.

Lift up thy head: thou sittest faint and fair—  
This sunset on thy brow—  
And see, with what an ecstasy of prayer  
A true knight greets thee now.

Smile on his passionate love, his radiant face,  
His consecrated sword;  
In one bright moment let thy matchless grace  
Give him a quick reward.

For as the heart beats wildly at its goal,  
With every prayer fulfilled,—  
Suddenly shivered is the golden bowl,  
The bounding pulse is stilled!

And, dead, he falls at thy beloved feet,  
Pierced by the fatal dart,  
Of joy too high, triumphant love too sweet  
For the imprisoned heart.

Dead at the goal! serene and satisfied,  
With never sigh nor moan,  
But with the exulting face of one who died  
Of joy and love alone.

\* \* \* \*

And *we* have seen, on many a loved one's face,  
This rapture at the goal;  
This joy in death, this last and sweetest grace  
Of the departing soul.

These, too, had travelled by a weary road,  
And, when the end drew nigh,  
They saw the glorious city, God's abode,  
Smile in the eastern sky;

And at this vision, heavenly and fair,  
And pure, without alloy—  
This infinite answer to a life-long prayer—  
They die at last of joy.

B. M.

## JOHNSON'S LIVES.

*Da mihi, Domine, scire quod sciendum est*—"Grant that the knowledge I get may be the knowledge which is worth having!"—the spirit of that prayer ought to rule our education. How little it does rule it, every discerning man will acknowledge. Life is short, and our faculties of attention and of recollection are limited; in education we proceed as if our life were endless, and our powers of attention and recollection inexhaustible. We have not time or strength to deal with half of the matters which are thrown upon our minds, and they prove a useless load to us. When some one talked to Themistocles of an art of memory, he answered: "Teach me rather to forget!" The sarcasm well criticises the fatal want of proportion between what we put into our minds and their real needs and powers.

From the time when first I was led to think about education, this want of proportion is what has most struck me. It is the great obstacle to progress, yet it is by no means remarked and contended against as it should be. It hardly begins to present itself until we pass beyond the strict elements of education—beyond the acquisition, I mean, of reading, of writing, and of calculating so far as the operations of common life require. But the moment we pass beyond these, it begins to appear. Languages, grammar, literature, history, geography, mathematics, the knowledge of nature—what of these is to be taught, how much, and how? There is no clear, well-grounded consent. The same with religion. Religion is surely to be taught, but what of it is to be taught, and how? A clear, well-grounded consent is again wanting. And taught in such fashion as things are now, how often must a candid and sensible man, if he could be offered an art of memory to secure

all that he has learned of them, as to a very great deal of it be inclined to say with Themistocles: "Teach me rather to forget!"

In England the common notion seems to be that education is advanced in two ways principally: by for ever adding fresh matters of instruction, and by preventing uniformity. I should be inclined to prescribe just the opposite course; to prescribe a severe limitation of the number of matters taught, a severe uniformity in the line of study followed. Wide ranging, and the multiplication of matters to be investigated, belong to private study, to the development of special aptitudes in the individual learner, and to the demands which they raise in him. But separate from all this should be kept the broad plain lines of study for almost universal use. I say *almost* universal, because they must of necessity vary a little with the varying conditions of men. Whatever the pupil finds set out for him upon these lines, he should learn; therefore it ought not to be too much in quantity. The essential thing is that it should be well chosen. If once we can get it well chosen, the more uniformly it can be kept to, the better. The teacher will be more at home; and besides, when we have got what is good and suitable, there is small hope of gain, and great certainty of risk, in departing from it.

No such lines are laid out, and perhaps no one could be trusted to lay them out authoritatively. But to amuse oneself with laying them out in fancy is a good exercise for one's thoughts. One may lay them out for this or that description of pupil, in this or that branch of study. The wider the interest of the branch of study taken, and the more extensive the class of pupils concerned, the



better for our purpose. Suppose we take the department of letters. It is interesting to lay out in one's mind the ideal line of study to be followed by all who have to learn Latin and Greek. But it is still more interesting to lay out the ideal line of study to be followed by all who are concerned with that body of literature which exists in English, because this class is so much more numerous amongst us. The thing would be, one imagines, to begin with a very brief introductory sketch of our subject; then to fix a certain series of works to serve as what the French, taking an expression from the builder's business, call *points de repère*—points which stand as so many natural centres, and by returning to which we can always find our way again, if we are embarrassed; finally, to mark out a number of illustrative and representative works, connecting themselves with each of these *points de repère*. In the introductory sketch we are amongst generalities, in the group of illustrative works we are amongst details; generalities and details have, both of them, their perils for the learner. It is evident that, for purposes of education, the most important parts by far in our scheme are what we call the *points de repère*. To get these rightly chosen and thoroughly known is the great matter. For my part, in thinking of this or that line of study which human minds follow, I feel always prompted to seek, first and foremost, the leading *points de repère* in it.

In editing for the use of the young the group of chapters which are now commonly distinguished as those of the Babylonian Isaiah, I drew attention to their remarkable fitness for serving as a point of this kind to the student of universal history. But a work which by many is regarded as simply and solely a document of religion, there is difficulty, perhaps, in employing for historical and literary purposes. With works of a secular character one is on safer ground. And for years past, whenever I have had occasion to use Johnson's *Lives of the*

*Poets*, the thought has struck me how admirable a *point de repère*, or fixed centre of the sort described above, these lives might be made to furnish for the student of English literature. If we could but take, I have said to myself, the most important of the lives in Johnson's volumes, and leave out all the rest, what a text-book we should have! The volumes at present are a work to stand in a library, "a work which no gentleman's library should be without." But we want to get from them a text-book, to be in the hands of every one who desires even so much as a general acquaintance with English literature;—and so much acquaintance as this who does not desire? The work as Johnson published it is not fitted to serve as such a text-book; it is too extensive, and contains the lives of many poets quite insignificant. Johnson supplied lives of all whom the booksellers proposed to include in their collection of British Poets; he did not choose the poets himself, although he added two or three to those chosen by the booksellers. Whatever Johnson did in the department of literary biography and criticism possesses interest and deserves our attention. But in his *Lives of the Poets* there are six of pre-eminent interest; the lives of six men who, while the rest in the collection are of inferior rank, stand out as names of the first class in English literature—Milton, Dryden, Swift, Addison, Pope, Gray. These six writers differ among themselves, of course, in power and importance, and every one can see, that, if we were following certain modes of literary classification, Milton would have to be placed on a solitary eminence far above any of them. But if, without seeking a close view of individual differences, we form a large and liberal first class among English writers, all these six personages—Milton, Dryden, Swift, Addison, Pope, Gray—must, I think, be placed in it. Their lives cover a space of more than a century and a half, from 1608, the year of Milton's birth, down to 1771, the date of the death of Gray. Through this space

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of more than a century and a half the six lives conduct us. We follow the course of what Warburton well calls "the most agreeable subject in the world, which is literary history," and follow it in the lives of men of letters of the first class. And the writer of their lives is himself, too, a man of letters of the first class. Malone calls Johnson "the brightest ornament of the eighteenth century." He is justly to be called, at any rate, a man of letters of the first class, and the greatest power in English letters during the eighteenth century. And in these characteristic lives, not finished until 1781, and "which I wrote," as he himself tells us, "in my usual way, dilatorily and hastily, unwilling to work and working with vigour and haste," we have Johnson mellowed by years, Johnson in his ripeness and plenitude, treating the subject which he loved best and knew best. Much of it he could treat with the knowledge and sure tact of a contemporary; even from Milton and Dryden he was scarcely further separated than our generation is from Burns and Scott. Having all these recommendations, his *Lives of the Poets* do indeed truly stand for what Boswell calls them, "the work which of all Dr. Johnson's writings will perhaps be read most generally and with most pleasure." And in the lives of the six chief personages of the work, the lives of Milton, Dryden, Swift, Addison, Pope, and Gray, we have its very kernel and quintessence; we have the work relieved of whatever is less significant, retaining nothing which is not highly significant, brought within easy and convenient compass, and admirably fitted to serve as a *point de repère*, a fixed and thoroughly known centre of departure and return, to the student of English literature.

I know of no such first-rate piece of literature, for supplying in this way the wants of the literary student, existing at all in any other language; or existing in our own language, for any period except the period which Johnson's six lives cover. A student

cannot read them without gaining from them, consciously or unconsciously, an insight into the history of English literature and life. He would find great benefit, let me add, from reading in connection with each biography something of the author with whom it deals; the first two books, say, of *Paradise Lost*, in connection with the life of Milton; *Absalom and Achitophel*, and the *Dedication of the Æneis*, in connection with the life of Dryden; in connection with Swift's life, the *Battle of the Books*; with Addison's, the *Coverley Papers*; with Pope's, the imitations of the *Satires* and *Epistles* of Horace. The *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* everybody knows, and will have it present to his mind when he reads the life of Gray. But of the other works which I have mentioned how little can this be said; to how many of us are Pope and Addison and Dryden and Swift, and even Milton himself, mere names, about whose date and history and supposed characteristics of style we may have learnt by rote something from a handbook, but of the real men and of the power of their works we know nothing! From Johnson's biographies the student will get a sense of what the real men were, and with this sense fresh in his mind he will find the occasion propitious for acquiring also, in the way pointed out, a sense of the power of their works.

This will seem to most people a very unambitious discipline. But the fault of most of the disciplines proposed in education is that they are by far too ambitious. Our improvers of education are almost always for proceeding by way of augmentation and complication; reduction and simplification, I say, is what is rather required. We give the learner too much to do, and we are over-zealous to tell him what he ought to think. Johnson himself has admirably marked the real line of our education through letters. He says in his life of Pope:—"Judgment is forced upon us by experience. He that reads many books must compare one opinion or one

style with another; and when he compares, must necessarily distinguish, reject, and prefer." The aim and end of education through letters is to get this experience. Our being told by another what its results will properly be found to be, is not, even if we are told aright, at all the same thing as getting the experience for ourselves. The discipline, therefore, which puts us in the way of getting it, cannot be called an inconsiderable or inefficacious one. We should take care not to imperil its acquisition by refusing to trust to it in its simplicity, by being eager to add, set right, and annotate. It is much to secure the reading, by young English people, of the lives of the six chief poets of our nation between the years 1650 and 1750, related by our foremost man of letters of the eighteenth century. It is much to secure their reading, under the stimulus of Johnson's interesting recital and forcible judgments, famous specimens of the authors whose lives are before them. Do not let us insist on also reviewing in detail and supplementing Johnson's work for them, on telling them what they ought really and definitively to think about the six authors and about the exact place of each in English literature. Perhaps our pupils are not ripe for it; perhaps, too, we have not Johnson's interest and Johnson's force; we are not the power in letters for our century which he was for his. We may be pedantic, obscure, dull, everything that bores, rather than everything that attracts; and so Johnson and his lives will repel, and will not be received, because we insist on being received along with them. Again, as we bar a learner's approach to Homer and Virgil by our *chevaux de frise* of elaborate grammar, so we are apt to stop his way to a piece of English literature by imbedding it in a mass of notes and additional matter. Mr. Croker's edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson* is a good example of the labour and ingenuity which may be spent upon a masterpiece, with the result, after all, really of rather encumbering than illustrating it. All knowledge

may be in itself good, but this kind of editing seems to proceed upon the notion that we have only one book to read in the course of our life, or else that we have eternity to read in. What can it matter to our generation whether it was Molly Aston or Miss Boothby whose preference for Lord Lyttelton made Johnson jealous, and produced in his *Life of Lyttelton* a certain tone of disparagement? With the young reader, at all events, our great endeavour should be to bring him face to face with masterpieces, and to hold him there, not distracting or rebutting him with needless excursions or trifling details.

I should like, therefore, to reprint Johnson's six chief lives, simply as they are given in the edition in four volumes octavo,—the edition which passes for being the first to have a correct and complete text,—and to leave the lives, in that natural form, to have their effect upon the reader. I should like to think that a number of young people might thus be brought to know an important period of our literary and intellectual history, by means of the lives of six of its leading and representative authors, told by a great man. I should like to think that they would go on, under the stimulus of the lives, to acquaint themselves with some leading and representative work of each author. In the six lives they would at least have secured, I think, a most valuable *point de repère* in the history of our English life and literature, a point from which afterwards to find their way; whether they might desire to ascend upwards to our anterior literature, or to come downwards to the literature of yesterday and of the present.

The six lives cover a period of literary and intellectual movement in which we are all profoundly interested. It is the passage of our nation to prose and reason; the passage to a type of thought and expression, modern, European, and which on the whole is ours at the present day, from a type antiquated, peculiar, and which is ours no longer. The period begins with a

prose like this of Milton: "They who to states and governors of the commonwealth direct their speech, high court of parliament! or wanting such access in a private condition, write that which they foresee may advance the public good; I suppose them, if at the beginning of no mean endeavour, not a little altered and moved inwardly in their minds." It ends with a prose like this of Smollett: "My spirit began to accommodate itself to my beggarly fate, and I became so mean as to go down towards Wapping, with an intention to inquire for an old school-fellow, who, I understood, had got the command of a small coasting vessel then in the river, and implore his assistance." These are extreme instances; but they give us no unfaithful notion of the change in our prose between the reigns of Charles I. and of George III. Johnson has recorded his own impression of the extent of the change and of its salutariness. Boswell gave him a book to read, written in 1702 by the English chaplain of a regiment stationed in Scotland. "It is sad stuff, sir," said Johnson, after reading it; "miserably written, as books in general then were. There is now an elegance of style universally diffused. No man now writes so ill as Martin's *Account of the Hebrides* is written. A man could not write so ill if he should try. Set a merchant's clerk now to write, and he'll do better."

It seems as if a simple and natural prose were a thing which we might expect to come easy to communities of men, and to come early to them; but we know from experience that it is not so. Poetry and the poetic form of expression naturally precede prose. We see this in ancient Greece. We see prose forming itself there gradually and with labour; we see it passing through more than one stage before it attains to thorough propriety and lucidity, long after forms of consummate adequacy have already been reached and used in poetry. It is a people's growth in practical life, and its native turn for developing this life

and for making progress in it, which awaken the desire for a good prose—a prose plain, direct, intelligible, serviceable. A dead language, the Latin, for a long time furnished the nations of Europe with an instrument of the kind, superior to any which they had yet discovered in their own. But nations such as England and France, called to a great historic life, and with powerful interests and gifts either social or practical, were sure to feel the need of having a sound prose of their own, and to bring such a prose forth. They brought it forth in the seventeenth century; France first, afterwards England.

The Restoration marks the real moment of birth of our modern English prose. Men of lucid and direct mental habit there were, such as Chillingworth, in whom before the Restoration the desire and the commencements of a modern prose show themselves. There were men like Barrow, weighty and powerful, whose mental habit the old prose suited, who continued its forms and locations after the Restoration. But the hour was come for the new prose, and it grew and prevailed. In Johnson's time its victory had long been assured, and the old style seemed barbarous. The prose writers of the eighteenth century have indeed their mannerisms and phrases which are no longer ours. Johnson says of Milton's blame of the universities for allowing young men designed for Orders in the Church to act in plays, "This is sufficiently peevish in a man, who, when he mentions his exile from college, relates, with great luxuriance, the compensation which the pleasures of the theatre afford him. Plays were therefore only criminal when they were acted by academics." We should nowadays not say *peevish* here, nor *luxuriance*, nor *academics*. Yet the style is ours by its organism, if not by its phrasing. It is by its organism—an organism opposed to length and involvement, and enabling us to be clear, plain, and short—that English style after the Restoration breaks with the

style of the times preceding it, finds the true law of prose, and becomes modern; becomes, in spite of superficial differences, the style of our own day.

Burnet has pointed out how we are under obligations in this matter to Charles II., whom Johnson described as "the last king of England who was a man of parts." A king of England by no means fulfils his whole duty by being a man of parts, or by loving and encouraging art, science, and literature. Yet the artist and the student of the natural sciences will always feel a kindness towards the two Charleses for their interest in art and science; and modern letters, too, have their debt to Charles II., although it may be quite true that that prince, as Burnet says, "had little or no literature." "The King had little or no literature, but true and good sense, and had got a right notion of style; for he was in France at the time when they were much set on reforming their language. It soon appeared that he had a true taste. So this helped to raise the value of these men (Tillotson and others), when the king approved of the style their discourses generally ran in, which was clear, plain, and short."

It is the victory of this prose style, "clear, plain, and short" over what Burnet calls "the old style, long and heavy," which is the distinguishing achievement, in the history of English letters, of the century following the Restoration. From the first it proceeded rapidly and was never checked. Burnet says of the Chancellor Finch, Earl of Nottingham—"He was long much admired for his eloquence, but it was laboured and affected, and he saw it much despised before he died." A like revolution of taste brought about a general condemnation of our old prose style, imperfectly disengaged from the style of poetry. By Johnson's time the new style, the style of prose, was altogether paramount in its own proper domain, and in its pride of victorious strength had invaded also the domain of poetry.

That invasion is now visited by us

with a condemnation not less strong and general than the condemnation which the eighteenth century passed upon the unwieldy prose of its predecessors. But let us be careful to do justice while we condemn. A thing good in its own place may be bad out of it. Prose requires a different style from poetry. Poetry, no doubt, is more excellent in itself than prose. In poetry man finds the highest and most beautiful expression of that which is in him. We had far better poetry than the poetry of the eighteenth century before that century arrived, we have had better since it departed. Like the Greeks, and unlike the French, we can point to an age of poetry anterior to our age of prose, eclipsing our age of prose in glory, and fixing the future character and conditions of our literature. We do well to place our pride in the Elizabethan age and Shakespeare, as the Greeks placed theirs in Homer. We did well to return in the present century to the poetry of that older age for illumination and inspiration, and to put aside, in a great measure, the poetry and poets intervening between Milton and Wordsworth. Milton, in whom our great poetic age expired, was the last of the immortals. Of the five poets whose lives follow his in our proposed volume, three, Dryden, Addison, and Swift, are eminent prose-writers as well as poets; two of the three, Swift and Addison, far more distinguished as prose-writers than as poets. The glory of English literature is in poetry, and in poetry the strength of the eighteenth century does not lie.

Nevertheless, the eighteenth century accomplished for us an immense literary progress, and even its shortcomings in poetry were an instrument to that progress, and served it. The example of Germany may show us what a nation loses from having no prose style. The practical genius of our people could not but urge irresistibly to the production of a real prose style, because for the purposes of modern life the old English prose, the prose of Milton and Taylor, is cumbersome,



unavailable, impossible. A style of regularity, uniformity, precision, balance, was wanted. These are the qualities of a serviceable prose style. Poetry has a different *logic*, as Coleridge said, from prose; poetical style follows another law of evolution than the style of prose. But there is no doubt that a style of regularity, uniformity, precision, balance, will acquire a yet stronger hold upon the mind of a nation, if it is adopted in poetry as well as in prose, and so comes to govern both. This is what happened in France. To the practical, modern, and social genius of the French, a true prose was indispensable. They produced one of conspicuous excellence, one marked in the highest degree by the qualities of regularity, uniformity, precision, balance. With little opposition from any deep-seated and imperious poetic instincts, they made their poetry conform to the law which was moulding their prose. French poetry became marked with the qualities of regularity, uniformity, precision, balance. This may have been bad for French poetry, but it was good for French prose. It heightened the perfection with which those qualities, the true qualities of prose, were impressed upon it. When England, at the Restoration, desired a modern prose, and began to create it, our writers turned naturally to French literature, which had just accomplished the very process which engaged them. The King's acuteness and taste, as we have seen, helped. Indeed, to the admission of French influence of all kinds, Charles the Second's character and that of his court were but too favourable. But the influence of the French writers was at that moment on the whole fortunate, and seconded what was a vital and necessary effort in our literature. Our literature required a prose which conformed to the true law of prose; and that it might acquire this the more surely, it compelled poetry, as in France, to conform itself to the law of prose likewise. The classic verse of French poetry was the Alexandrine, a measure favourable to

the qualities of regularity, uniformity, precision, balance. Gradually a measure favourable to those very same qualities—the ten-syllable couplet—established itself as the classic verse of England, until in the eighteenth century it had become the ruling form of our poetry. Poetry, or rather the use of verse, entered in a remarkable degree, during that century, into the whole of the daily life of the civilised classes; and the poetry of the century was a perpetual school of the qualities requisite for a good prose, the qualities of regularity, uniformity, precision, balance. This may have been of no great service to English poetry, although to say that it has been of no service at all, to say that the eighteenth century has in no respect changed the conditions of English poetical style, or that it has changed them for the worse, would be untrue. But it was undeniably of signal service to that which was the great want and work of the hour, English prose.

Do not let us, therefore, hastily despise Johnson and his century for their defective poetry and criticism of poetry. True, Johnson is capable of saying: "Surely no man could have fancied that he read *Lycidas* with pleasure had he not known the author!" True, he is capable of maintaining "that the description of the temple in Congreve's *Mourning Bride* was the finest poetical passage he had ever read—he recollected none in Shakespeare equal to it." But we are to conceive of Johnson and of his century as having a special task committed to them, the establishment of English prose; and as capable of being warped and narrowed in their judgments of poetry by this exclusive task. Such is the common course and law of progress; one thing is done at a time, and other things are sacrificed to it. We must be thankful for the thing done, if it is valuable, and we must put up with the temporary sacrifice of other things to this one. The other things will have their turn sooner or later. Above all, a nation with profound poetical

instincts, like the English nation, may be trusted to work itself right again in poetry after periods of mistaken poetical practice. Even in the midst of an age of such practice, and with his style frequently showing the bad influence of it, Gray was saved, we may say, and remains a poet whose work has high and pure worth, simply by knowing the Greeks thoroughly, more thoroughly than any English poet had known them since Milton. Milton was a survivor from the great age of poetry; Dryden, Addison, Pope, and Swift were mighty workers for the age of prose. Gray, a poet in the midst of the age of prose, a poet, moreover, of by no means the highest force and of scanty productiveness, nevertheless claims a place among the six chief personages of Johnson's lives, because it was impossible for an English poet, even in that age, who knew the great Greek masters intimately, not to respond to their good influence, and to be rescued from the false poetical practice of his contemporaries. Of such avail to a nation are deep poetical instincts even in an age of prose. How much more may they be trusted to assert themselves after the age of prose has ended, and to remedy any poetical mischief done by it! And meanwhile the work of the hour, the necessary and appointed work, has been done, and we have got our prose.

Let us always bear in mind, therefore, that the century so well represented by Dryden, Addison, Pope, and Swift, and of which the literary history is so powerfully written by Johnson in his lives, is a century of prose—a century of which the great work in literature was the formation of English prose. Johnson was himself a labourer in this great and needful work, and was ruled by its influences. His blame of genuine poets like Milton and Gray, his over-praise of artificial poets like Pope, are to be taken as the utterances of a man who worked for an age of prose, who was ruled by its influences, and could not but be ruled by them. Of poetry he speaks as a man whose sense for that with which

he is dealing is in some degree imperfect.

Yet even on poetry Johnson's utterances are valuable, because they are the utterances of a great and original man. That indeed he was; and to be conducted by such a man through an important century cannot but do us good, even though our guide may in some places be less competent than in others. Johnson was the man of an age of prose. Furthermore, he was a strong force of conservation and concentration, in an epoch which by its natural tendencies seemed moving towards expansion and freedom. But he was a great man, and great men are always instructive. The more we study him, the higher will be our esteem for the power of his mind, the width of his interests, the largeness of his knowledge, the freshness, fearlessness, and strength of his judgments. The higher, too, will be our esteem for his character. His well-known lines on Levett's death, beautiful and touching lines, are still more beautiful and touching because they recall a whole history of Johnson's goodness, tenderness, and charity. Human dignity, on the other hand, he maintained, we all know how well, through the whole long and arduous struggle of his life, from his servitor days at Oxford, down to the *Jum moriturus* of his closing hour. His faults and strangenesses are on the surface, and catch every eye. But on the whole we have in him a good and admirable type, worthy to be kept in our view for ever, of "the ancient and inbred integrity, piety, good-nature and good-humour of the English people."

A volume giving us Johnson's Lives of Milton, Dryden, Swift, Addison, Pope, Gray, would give us, therefore, the compendious story of a whole important age in English literature, told by a great man, and in a performance which is itself a piece of English literature of the first class. If such a volume could but be prefaced by Lord Macaulay's *Life of Johnson*, it would be perfect.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.